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INSIDE: • Mayor Brown on quality of life • A vibrant city grows • Becoming an arts and culture hub

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'Residents love life in Airdrie'



**Mayor
Peter
Brown**

Results from our recent citizen satisfaction survey tell us that our residents love life in Airdrie. They rated their overall quality of life in our city at 91 per cent. Airdrie has just over 63,000 of the kindest, most caring people you'll ever meet. It's my pleasure to share with you my thoughts on the warm, welcoming city that we all love.

If you were to ask me to describe Airdrie in just one word, it would be: friendly. Voluntarism and philanthropy seem to go hand-in-hand with a postal code here. The compassion and generosity I see daily throughout our community is inspiring. From every-day residents and families to businesses of all sizes, the people here are always looking out for one another. You feel it in our schools, friendly local businesses and anytime a group gets together. It's that caring spirit that can make anyone feel at home here.



Business licenses in 2016 were up 5.7 per cent to 3,789 with 96 new commercial/industrial and 381 home-based businesses opened, creating 512 new full and part time jobs. CONTRIBUTED

And you won't just feel at home, but safe here at home. Airdrie Fire, RCMP, Municipal Enforcement and AHS receive high satisfaction ratings each year and are noted as some of our community's greatest

strengths. Nearly all of our surveyed residents said that Airdrie is a safe place to live, before and after dark.

We have been known for our excellent schools, friendly neighbourhoods, exceptional

recreational opportunities, protective services and restaurants. But once you get here you'll see that there's so much more happening. We have exciting cultural activities through the year, including our beautiful

Festival of Lights and the Bert Church Live Theatre, which attracts sought-after musicians and performers from around the globe.

Nose Creek Park, Chinook Winds Parks are gems in our

city. Nose Creek is receiving a much needed renovation and this year construction will begin on a new amphitheatre and boardwalk along the south side of the pond. It's easy to get there or anywhere from any neighbourhood through the extensive network of year-round pathways that connect our city.

We've been fortunate through the difficult economic times that growth and opportunity are still thriving here. Business licenses in 2016 were up 5.7 per cent to 3,789 with 96 new commercial/industrial and 381 home-based businesses opened, creating 512 new full- and part-time jobs.

Millions of dollars of investment in local shopping districts and schools are nearing completion, which will only add to the over \$203 million in residential value growth experienced last year. Our residential neighbourhoods are diverse with unique housing options for every family and every budget.

Whether you're considering relocating, starting a business or investing, consider Airdrie a smart decision. As mayor and on behalf of city council, I invite you to explore everything Airdrie has to offer.

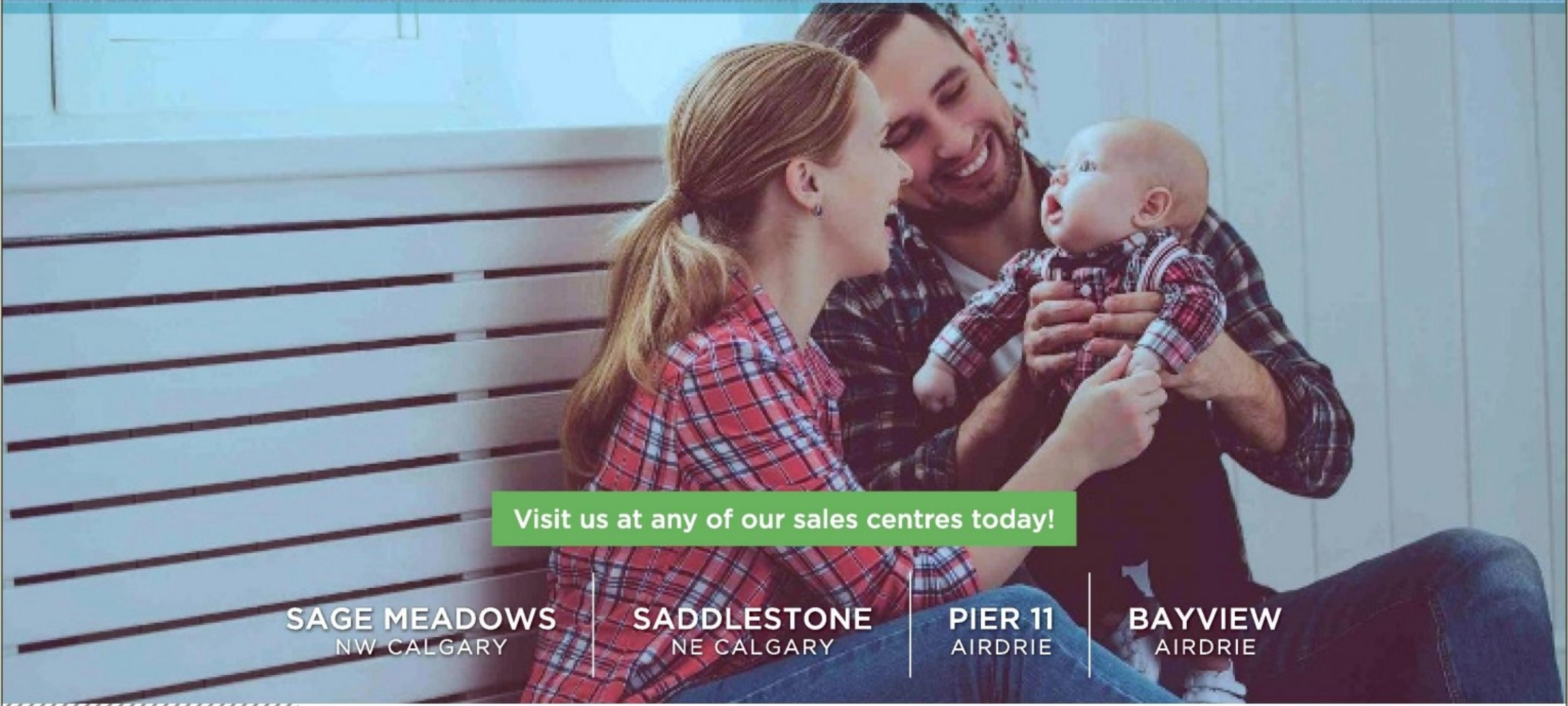
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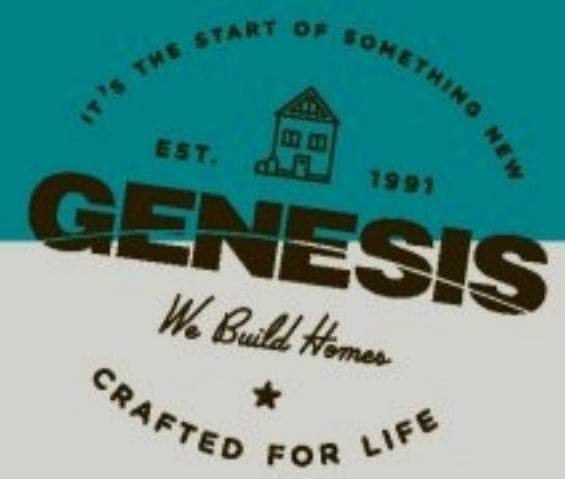
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Small businesses ramping up

ECONOMY

Influx of local entrepreneurs joining Airdrie business sector

Krista Sylvester

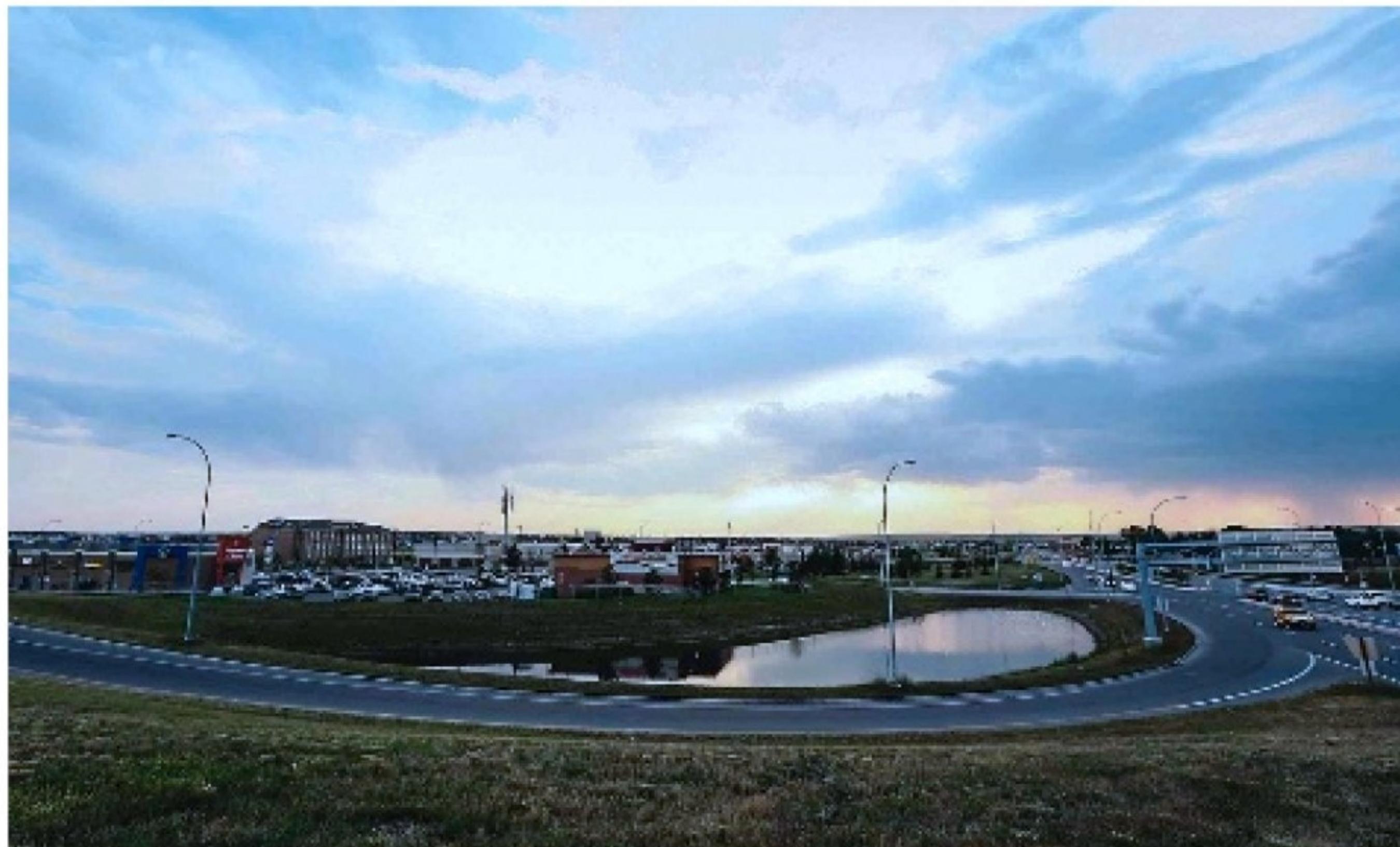
It's no secret that the economy has been in shambles, but there is a positive trend happening in Airdrie's local business sector.

Despite the downturn, there are still a large number of entrepreneurs that are opening storefront businesses and home-based businesses, according to Chamber of Commerce president Linda Bruce. Bruce is also the former mayor of Airdrie.

"Every month, I am still surprised to see the number of businesses that are opening storefronts or attaining home-based business permits in Airdrie," she says.

Small business plays an important role in Airdrie's local economy. Airdrie is home to just over 1,800 licensed Airdrie-based businesses. Of that, 99 per cent have fewer than 100 employees (consistent with the Canadian percentage). A further 86 per cent of Airdrie businesses have less than 10 employees. More than 58 per cent of local businesses operate from a home — 24 per cent of those businesses are interested in one day moving to a storefront location.

"What we're also seeing is small local businesses starting up and a lot of time if it's home-based and they start thriving, they move into the community



Airdrie is home to just over 1,800 licensed Airdrie-based businesses. CONTRIBUTED

and they become another face of the business community in Airdrie."

Entrepreneurs starting businesses isn't a new trend to Airdrie; it's been happening for the last couple of decades, Bruce says. But it seems to be happening more in the current economy.

"We probably saw a boom of it because we didn't have people with severances and there was an opportunity to start looking at something like their own business or something that they've always wanted to do



Every month, I am still surprised to see the number of businesses that are opening storefronts or attaining home-based business permits in Airdrie. Linda Bruce

and knew that they weren't going to be returning to work. So, it was the best of times, the worst of times, and we see that in the business community."

Airdrie is known for welcoming businesses, small and large, and there has been a strong appetite to support local business.

"What you see with the mom and pop shops is people know them; they're your neighbours. They get up and mow their lawn or shovel their walk just like everyone else. And then they go to their business a few kilometres away. Everyone knows everyone."



Linda Bruce. CONTRIBUTED

PROGRAM

SMART approach to start-ups

The SMARTstart program, which partners entrepreneurs with business mentors, is entering its fourth year.

This year's program, which launched on Feb. 28, involves 21 entrepreneurs representing 18 businesses and 16 mentors.

SMARTstart was the brainchild of Community Futures Centre West (CFCW) and is delivered by the Airdrie Business Resource Partnership, which includes Airdrie Chamber of Commerce, City of Airdrie Economic Development and CFCW.

To take part in the program, businesses have to be less than three years old. Entrepreneurs with a business idea are also encouraged to apply to take part in the program.

Canadian studies show that only 35 per cent of new businesses survive their first five years. In contrast, statistics show that business owners with education in entrepreneurship, or previous entrepreneur experience have an 80 to 90 per cent chance of success with a new business.

The program has helped more than 50 local entrepreneurs to date. KRISTA SYLVESTER

35%

According to Canadian studies, only 35 per cent of new businesses survive their first five years.

Airdrie and Calgary real estate experts



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What's behind Airdrie's growth?

VIBRANT CITY

Area continues to be one of the fastest growing communities

Christy Nich

Airdrie is a vibrant city, full of young families ready to work hard while enjoying the quieter lifestyle. It continues to be one of Canada's fastest growing communities, with the population growth exceeding five per cent per annum.

The City of Airdrie had a population of close to 62,000 in 2016. The last federal census done in 2011 shows an increase of over 47 per cent from 2006 and the projections are a further 75 per cent growth by 2030. Calgary's population is projected to grow by only 35 per cent over the same time period.

So what's their secret? Well, Airdrie is only six kilometres from the Calgary city limits, 15 minutes from Calgary International Airport, and there's direct access to the Provincial Highway No. 2, also known as the Queen Elizabeth II, which is Alberta's busiest artery.

Calgary has more employment opportunities, but many employees choose to live in Airdrie because of the housing prices and, with the completion of the north section of Calgary's Ring Road, it's much easier and faster to get



The average price for a home in Airdrie has dropped to almost \$386,000. OLGA MARDONES

to any part of Calgary rather than having to rely on Deerfoot Trail.

The real estate market in Airdrie is reflecting this boom in population. The municipality annexed 12,600 acres in 2012 to increase the land base from 8,179 to 20,819 acres.

City council adopted the Airdrie City Plan in 2014, described as a 'long range, strategic plan that sets direction for new development through the whole city.'

New communities are springing up. As of 2016, new developments were planned for the southern sector community of Windsong, the western communities of Midtown, Bay-side and Baysprings, and the southwest areas known as Hill-crest and Cooper's Crossing for a proposed net population gain of approximately 8,200

new Airdrieonians (a heavily debated moniker). The Lanark development by Melcor has proposed to build housing for 1,218 residents on 320 acres and South Point by Vesta has laid claim to 70 acres to provide 587 residential units.

"I think as we continue to grow we're getting all the businesses and amenities to go along with that growth," says Kent Rupert, Airdrie's Economic Development team leader, citing Genesis Place as an example and the recent citizen satisfaction survey that showed 99 per cent of people living in Airdrie feel safe.

"The people that come from Eastern Canada choose Airdrie as a market because it's a little smaller," Rupert says, "but you still have access to Flames games, football games, opera, that type of thing."



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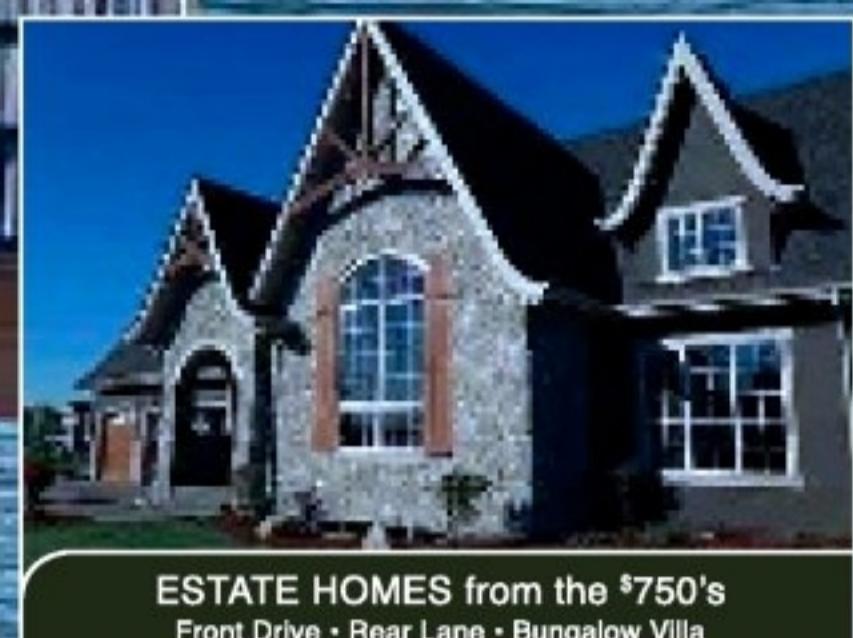


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Locals submit vision for downtown development

PLANNING

Council asks for input via focus groups, online surveys

Krista Sylvester

Airdrie residents care about the future of their downtown.

When the city of Airdrie planned three information ses-

sions to get feedback about the downtown visioning exercise, they thought it would be enough. However, there was so much demand from the public that they had to extend the number of focus groups, according to Stephen Utz, co-ordinator of planning and development for the City of Airdrie.

"We were very pleased by the overall response that we received. Due to overwhelming demand, we actually ended up running five focus groups when we had originally planned to

host three sessions," he says.

Airdrie has an existing downtown plan which was last updated in 2008; however, a full-scale public consultation on the downtown core had not been conducted since 1999, according to Utz.

Plans for a major redevelopment of Airdrie's downtown, known as The Square, stalled last November after public outcry about the way the project was announced. Residents were concerned about the cost of the project, possible conflict

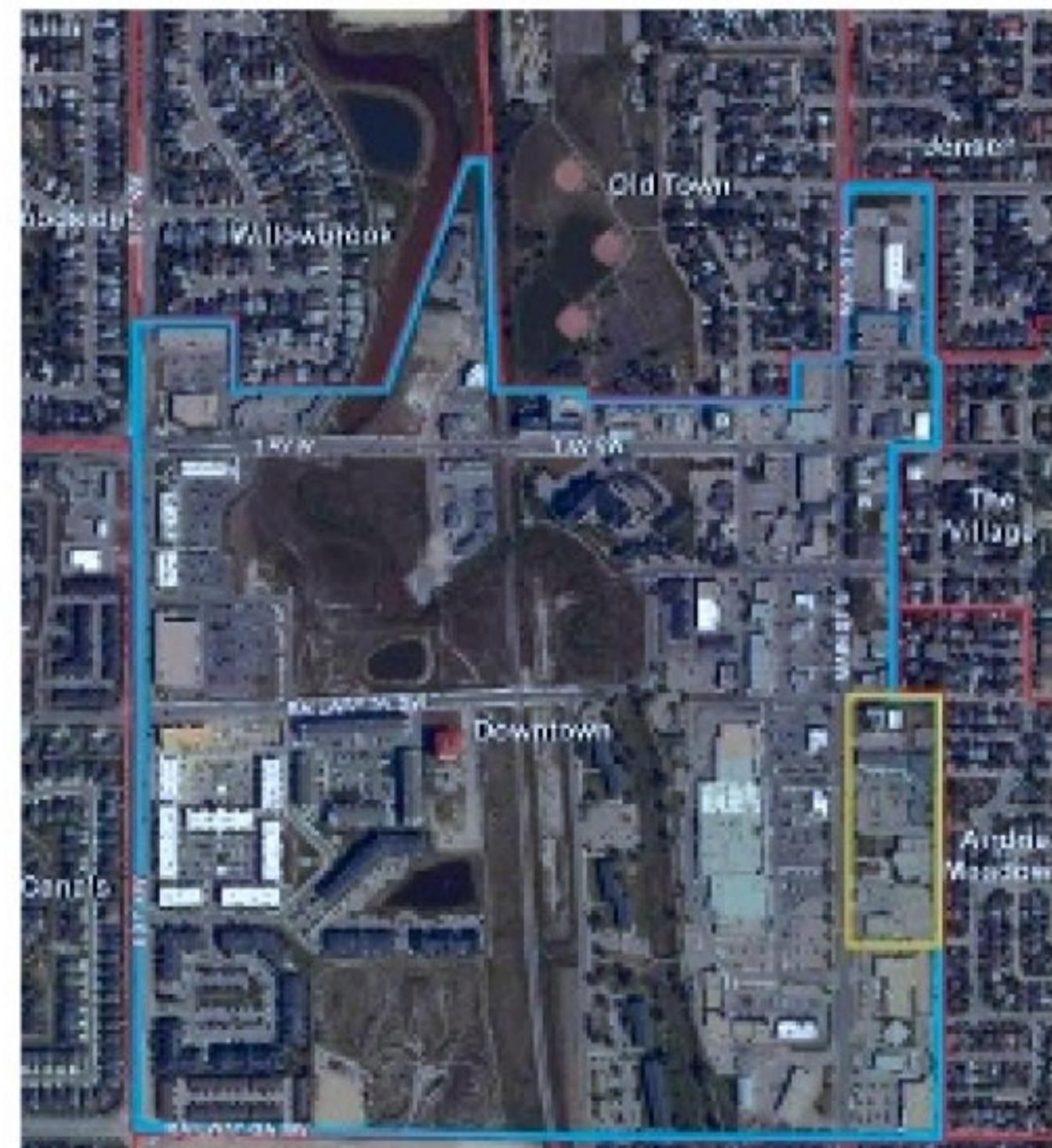
2008

Airdrie's downtown plan hasn't been updated since 2008. A full-scale public consultation on the downtown core hasn't been conducted since 1999.

of interest and lack of public consultation. Shortly after, council voted to carry out the downtown visioning exercise because they wanted to check in with residents to hear how they felt about downtown and determine whether or not further downtown planning was desired by the citizens and stakeholders.

Five different platforms were offered to residents as part of the downtown visioning exercise to give everyone an opportunity to participate in the method that worked best for them, including public workshops, focus groups, an online survey, individual and small group meetings and e-mail and phone submissions.

"From these engagement methods, we were able to determine how participants define



The blue line indicates the current area defined as downtown by the City of Airdrie. CONTRIBUTED

the boundaries of downtown, how they feel about downtown currently and what they would propose as a vision for downtown Airdrie going forward," Utz adds.

Council's decision to proceed with the downtown visioning exercise will allow administration to report back on whether or not a new vision and a new plan for downtown is desired by residents. While Utz can't speak to what direction residents are leaning, he says all of the information can come be-

fore council as early as April 18.

"It is our intent to report back to council and provide options on whether to proceed with the preparation of a new plan for Airdrie's downtown, to make minor changes to the existing Airdrie Downtown Plan from 2008, or to leave the existing Airdrie downtown plan in place."

Depending on the feedback received, council may decide the current downtown plan is aligned with the city's future needs and may direct staff to make minor tweaks. Or, they may decide the feedback shows a different direction for downtown and that a new plan is required. Should a whole new plan be required, further public consultation will ensue as it is developed.

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“Due to the overwhelming demand, we actually ended up running five focus groups when we had originally planned to host three sessions. Stephen Utz

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Calgary metro

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BEAM ME UP

Elisa Adams paints on a steel beam that will form part of the building, expected to be complete by 2018.
ELIZABETH CAMERON/FOR METRO

Lit lovers send signatures to the future on chunk of New Central Library, metroNEWS

Five new school sites announced

EDUCATION

Total of eight builds planned across Alberta


Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

The Calgary Board of Education said they've put a priority on keeping their youngest students closest to home—and they're happy to see Alberta's government paying attention.

On Tuesday, at Calgary's Forest Lawn High School, Alberta Finance Minister Joe Ceci announced 26 school projects across the province, including new builds, replacement builds and modernizations.

"We were awarded three new K-4 schools and so we believe that that's really important because we've heard from our parents to keep the youngest students closest to home," said CBE board chair Joy Bowen-Eyre.

Of the 26 projects, the Calgary Catholic School District was awarded a new build for an elementary school in Airdrie and another in Auburn Bay.

The CBE will see the three new K-4

schools built in Cranston, Evergreen and Coventry Hills. In addition, they were granted funding for a major modernization to Forest Lawn High School. These were schools identified in their 2016 three-year capital plan.

"The high school's career and technologies area will be expanded, which will provide additional spaces for welding, carpentry, cosmetology and right here in the automotive area," said Ceci.

This past school year, the CBE saw six new K-4 schools open, with two more opening in the upcoming school year as well as one K-9 school.

With elementary schools coming online, the province hinted that the influx of younger students moving on wouldn't be ignored in future budgets.

"Next year there will be new announcements for additional schools, and I'm sure that some of those projects that the CBE identified that didn't get addressed this year will be addressed next year," said Ceci.

In last week's budget, the NDP allocated \$500 million for these projects.

Ceci said Tuesday that the majority of the projects will be ready by September 2021, while others — like a replacement school in Irma — will be done in as little as 18 months.

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Historic house getting no love in high-density region

HOUSING

Owner worries century-old home will get crowded out

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

The tension between heritage and density can be seen in front of a home on 21 Ave SW in Calgary.

The two for-sale signs in front of a 112-year-old two-storey home in Killarney tell part of the story.

Shauna Marie MacDonald bought the house 11 years ago, and even then, the seller was offering the property up as two lots. MacDonald decided to purchase the subdivided lot and keep the original property whole.

"There's something about having larger lots with older homes," she said. "It makes it feel like it's a grand piece together instead of how we cookie-cutter everything on small lots."

When she first put the house up for sale before Christmas, she intended to possibly sell the lots separately, but she wanted to give the house buyer the right of first refusal on the lot.

She said she was hoping the right buyer would see value in having a spacious yard, but



Amidst economic pressure to split lots in Calgary, Shauna Marie MacDonald is hoping to sell her century home in Killarney to someone who will preserve its character and the original lot. JENNIFER FRIESSEN / FOR METRO

people were confused when they learned the price listed was only for the house and half the lot.

"Because they sell houses in this market based on square footage — not character or design or anything else," said MacDonald. "Basically people look at the square footage and say, 'Well, that's not worth it.'"

To be more transparent, MacDonald and her realtor decided to put out two signs. She's also

planning a divider to show the size of the lot.

While it's MacDonald's hope the lot will remain as it was in 1905, Josh Traptow, executive director of the Calgary Heritage Authority, said building density around heritage properties is a welcome practice.

"If anything, that lends more credibility to heritage by showing what used to be there, and what's there now," he said. "It

gives an easy contrast of what's new and what's old."

MacDonald said the home once added density to the community in a different way. It was divided up into a rooming house in the mid-20th century, until someone bought it about 16 years ago and restored it to its former glory.

She hopes now to see a family move in, as the 1,350-square-foot home is too much for her alone.

+ IN DETAIL

- The house was built in 1905 by one of the founding families of Killarney.

- The asking price for the 3-bed, 3.5-bathroom home and half the lot is \$799,900, or \$585.20 per square foot.

POLITICS

No PST without asking

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley says she wouldn't bring in a provincial sales tax without seeking a mandate from voters.

Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall said this week his government is considering increasing consumption taxes as it wrestles with a budget deficit brought on in part by low resource prices.

In a Facebook post ahead of his government's budget Wednesday, Wall said Western provinces have been dependent on resource revenue for too long.

Alberta has some of the same budgetary problems as its neighbour to the east, but Notley says a sales tax is not something that can be brought in without first campaigning on it.

"An issue like the sales tax is something that ... you need to put to the population," she said.

"You can't just pull it out of your back pocket without giving them any heads-up or any opportunity to engage in it."

She said her party campaigned on raising corporate taxes and income taxes on the wealthy, and that's what it did.

"We feel fairly strongly that on key questions like that, we should stick to what we ran on."

She said bringing in a PST in Alberta might be talked about in the next election, but she won't move on it before then.

Alberta is the only province without a sales tax despite repeated suggestions from economists that having one would be the best way to deal with unstable government revenues.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Group looks for new ideas

FEDERAL BUDGET

Sending cash to cities could better address homelessness

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

With major dollars expected for affordable housing in Wednesday's federal budget, The Calgary Housing Foundation (CHF) is hoping some of that money will flow directly to the city, rather than the province.

Kevin McNichol, VP of strategy at CHF, said housing and supports are traditionally the responsibility of the provincial government, and federal dollars would have to flow through the province. But he also knows the current government is open to new ideas.

"Our large urban centres have been fairly active with this federal government and the government seems fairly responsive, so I'd be curious to see how they would roll out this housing as a principle and



Calgary is well below the national average in available affordable housing, but the Calgary Homeless Foundation wants to see innovative use of federal funds to address the problem, not just straight-up construction. THE CANADIAN PRESS

as a whole," he said.

McNichol said when it comes to affordable housing, it might be better to get dollars to the municipalities, because problems vary from city to city.

"There's enough regional

differences — and a lot of them are localized to the economies — that a blanket solution of just building affordable housing doesn't translate the same in every community," he said.

Although he doesn't really

expect to see it in this budget, McNichol said housing funding that's tied to individuals rather than projects is another solution he'd like to see.

Ron Kneebone, professor of economics at the university of Calgary's School of Public

A blanket solution of just building affordable housing doesn't translate the same in every community.

Kevin McNichol

Policy, has studied the feasibility of boosting people's incomes to address housing.

"You can either make their housing cheaper or you can give them more income," said Kneebone, adding that the latter option is cheaper.

He said even a small supplement of \$100 per month can take someone in poverty from homelessness to market housing.

That also creates a market incentive for landlords to build more affordable market housing on their own, according to Kneebone.

He said it's unlikely the federal government will give supplements to individuals in this way, because social assistance is a provincial responsibility.

FRAUD Bank accounts accessed

Calgary police are looking for a person of interest after multiple bank accounts were accessed illegally at banks and a casino.

The police believe two men were involved in the activity.

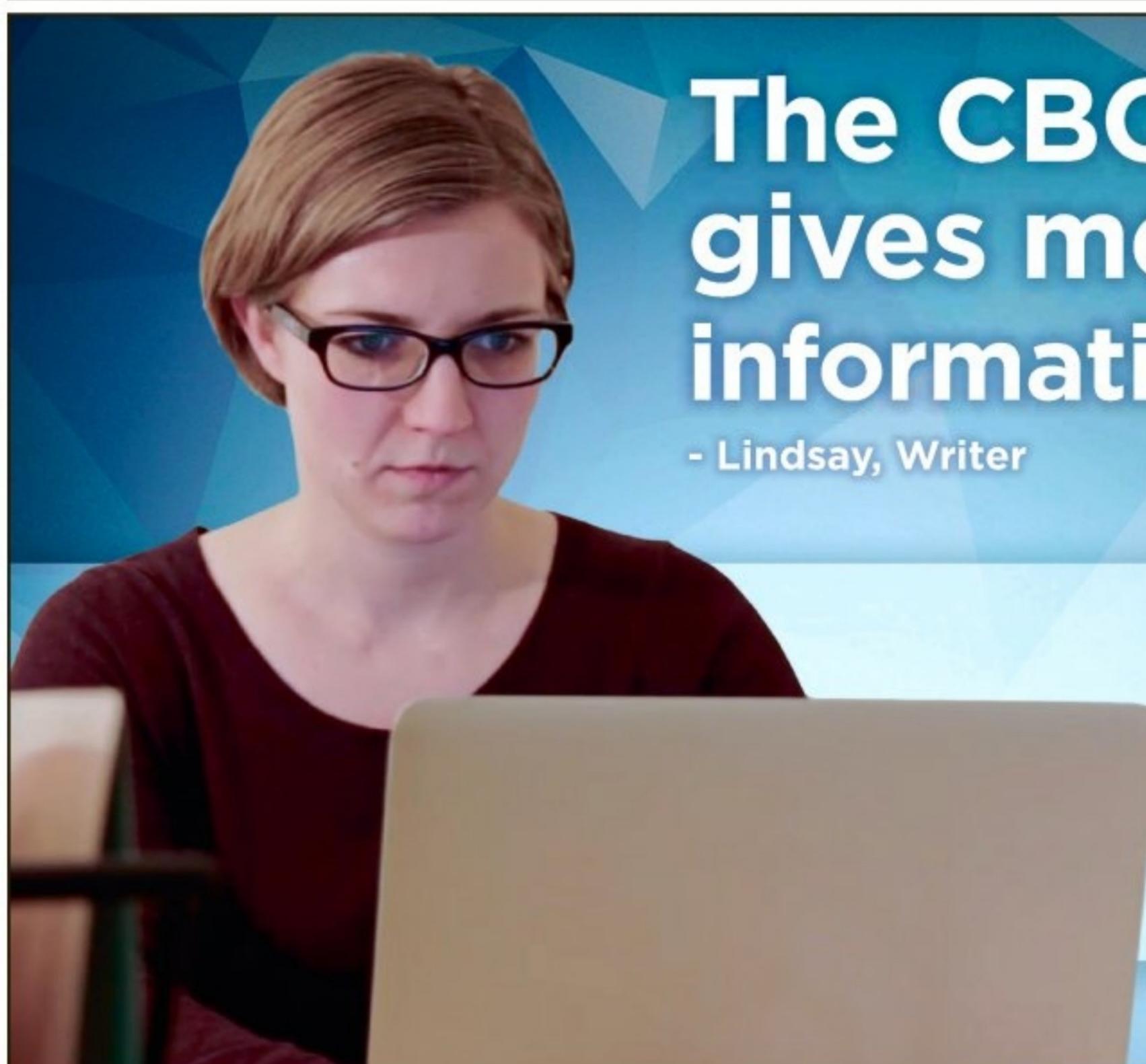
Between 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 27 and 2 p.m. the next day, the men visited multiple banks in Calgary, Okotoks and Airdrie and withdrew



Police looking for this man.

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GOVERNMENT

City plans budget process revamp in face of economic uncertainty



**Darren
Krause**
Metro | Calgary

City of Calgary administration said they would be looking at more of a services-based budget in the future, the result of ongoing economic uncertainty in the city.

City administration faced questions from city councillors at Tuesday's Priorities and Finance committee in an overview of 2016 budget performance.

Coun. Evan Woolley queried city manager Jeff Fielding on how the city's budget process might change given current economic times.

"One of the struggles we've had to explain is despite all of our massive savings we're setting these four-year budgets based on 4.7 per cent (property

tax increase) and all of these efficiencies gained on that," said Coun. Evan Woolley.

Fielding said upcoming budget principles would reflect the current state of the economy.

"Your (previous) action plan was a document devised to respond to unprecedented growth. It was really a document that sat on top of the budget," Fielding said.

"We're going to be introducing to you a services-based approach that's going to respond to decisions you need to make in a downturn, as opposed to decisions you need to make when the economy is booming."

Fielding said the decision will be based around the services each department will offer and whether you "add more or you take away."

"The concentration on our



Calgary city manager
Jeff Fielding. CONTRIBUTED

2018 budget will be on the adds and subtractions from the base."

Starting in the 2019-2022 budget cycle, Fielding said the emphasis will be less on departmental spending and more on the investment in city services.

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'You don't need a tan to be beautiful'

HEALTH

Survivor of cancer speaks out on risks of indoor tanning



**Elizabeth
Cameron**
For Metro | Calgary

It's not worth risking your life for bronzed skin, according to a skin cancer survivor who frequented tanning beds for a decade.

"The notion that you have to put on goggles should be the first clue that maybe it isn't good for your body. At the time, I think I was in a bit of denial," said Becky Lynn, a Calgary woman who is speaking out about her experience to shed light on the risks of indoor tanning.

Alberta is the last province in Canada to allow minors in the tanning bed, even though a bill that would ban the practice passed two years ago.

"We know the NDP were very supportive prior to the passage of (Bill 22). We think it just hasn't been a priority, that somehow it slipped under the radar," said Evie Eshpeter, a public policy analyst who spoke about the issue on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society.

"We aren't advocating for a full ban on indoor tanning



Becky Lynn started tanning when she was 16 and was diagnosed with melanoma ten years later. She wants others to know getting a tan isn't worth it. ELIZABETH CAMERON/FOR METRO

equipment, however, the bill will mandate the disclosure of health risks, which we think is really important," Eshpeter said.

Lynn first visited a tanning salon when she was 16, and kept a tan going throughout university.

At 24, noticed a new spot on her leg and got it checked — it was fine. Two years later, she noticed it was changing, and a biopsy was done.

"Then we got the bad news," she said.

The spot on her leg had turned into melanoma, the

deadliest form of skin cancer that is caused by radiation 90 per cent of the time, according to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Lynn said tanning beds are simply not safe, despite salons that try to convince you otherwise.

"If you look around, you're surrounded by the dream of looking good and being on vacation and being healthy," Lynn said. "I feel disgusted by it, honestly. It's very frustrating."

She said it's wrong for an industry to market a known carcinogen in a way that promotes a false sense of safety, and wants tanning beds to be labelled with the same level of caution as cigarettes.

"People who are visiting the salons deserve to have accurate information presented to them," Lynn said.

"You don't need a tan to be beautiful."





The Calgary Police Service introduced the mounted unit's newest member, Ortona, a 12-year-old Percheron cross on Tuesday. AUTUMN FOX/FOR METRO

Police boost horsepower

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mounted unit member named in tribute to veterans

Autumn Fox
For Metro | Calgary

Calgary Police Service proudly introduced its newest four-legged recruit, Ortona, who is joining the CPS mounted unit as a police service horse.

The 12-year-old Percheron cross, who has a background in show jumping, was selected because of his fitness and friendly demeanour.

Sgt. Kelly Oberg oversees the CPS mounted unit and said they are working to shift the role of the horses from ornamental to operational as part of their crime management strategy, or "the policing side of being on a horse."

"What that means as citizens is that you are going to see more and more horseback patrols out in your communities," he said.

Oberg said having a mounted unit has been beneficial because of the positive response from the public when encountering the horses at public events such as

Stampede breakfasts.

But from a policing perspective, horses can be utilized to take on tasks that might not be as easy to conduct on foot or by vehicle.

The height of the horses also offers a greater vantage point for officers, which aids in community, parkway and river patrols, search and rescue, and crowd de-escalation — which Oberg said may come in handy if Calgary sees the return of the Red Mile pending a Flames playoff run.

Including Ortona, the CPS mounted unit now has four horses ready to be deployed, with another expected to be joining the team later this year, and a sixth in 2018.

CPS has also decided to honour Canada's veterans by naming the horses after significant events in Canadian military history. Ortona was named after the Battle of Ortona, which occurred in Italy during the Second World War.

Ortona is expected to be on patrol within the next few weeks, and Oberg encourages Calgarians to give the rookie a warm welcome.

"If you see mounted officers on patrol in your community, we encourage you to absolutely approach, and engage, speak to, and come and meet the horses."

You are going to see more and more horseback patrols out in your communities.

Kelly Oberg

FUNDRAISER

Slump in economy still affecting STARS lottery

STARS is counting on the generosity of Albertans in hopes of selling out their 2017 lottery.

As of Tuesday, March 21, the day before the deadline for ticket sales, only 92 per cent of tickets had been sold, down seven per cent from the same time last year.

Fatima Khawaja, spokesperson for STARS, said she hopes Albertans will come through in the fundraiser's final push.

"STARS has been around since 1985 and flown over 33,000

western Canadians since then. But we would not have been able to do that without the grassroots support of Albertans," Khawaja said.

The fundraiser is the organization's biggest annual source of income, with a sold out lottery raising \$10 million — enough to provide funding to run one of the three STARS bases in Calgary, Edmonton and Grande Prairie for a year.

Khawaja said that while Albertans may be feeling the pinch

Some of the grand prizes this year include four fully-furnished showhomes, six vehicles and 24 vacations, as well as numerous cash prizes.

"At the end of the day, while you might win a home, or a car, or a trip, truly, it's our patients that win with their lives. We've had countless patients that have come back and tell us that they truly feel like they won the lottery when STARS saved them or their loved ones," Khawaja said.

AUTUMN FOX/FOR METRO

It's our patients that win with their lives.

Fatima Khawaja

financially, "emergencies don't take breaks."

Tickets are \$25 each and can be purchased through the STARS lottery website until midnight, March 22.

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CBE board chair Joy Bowen-Eyre said they are grappling with the disconnect between what parents have told CBE about busing, and what it being imposed upon them by the government.

METRO

Bill 1 busing rules has board worried

EDUCATION

Sees disconnect between parent wishes and legislation

 **Lucie Edwardson**
Metro | Calgary

The Calgary Board of Education is worried about the transportation service levels they'll be able to provide to their students based on Bill 1.

Last week, Alberta's Education minister David Eggen told reporters that heading into the fall the 2.4 kilometres was the distance students would have to live away from school to have their yellow school bus fees covered by the province as indicated in Bill 1.

That has public board officials concerned.

"I have to say, we're extremely worried. We held an extensive transportation engagement

sessions last year with our parents," said CBE board chair Joy Bowen-Eyre. "We heard from our parents that a 2.4-kilometre walk is too far."

The CBE said the engagement work began in January 2016, with active engagement taking place in March.

Parents, students, staff and community members were invited to participate in 20 in-person sessions and two online surveys.

The cost of the work (January to present) is approximately \$160,000 and includes external partners developing plans and strategies, facilitating and hosting sessions, survey development, data analysis, reporting and more. It doesn't include CBE staff time.

Bowen-Eyre said based on the engagement, the CBE understands the values of its parents and students, and now they're "grappling with the fact that

there's a real disconnect" between what parents said and "what's being imposed upon us by the government."

When asked to respond about the engagement — which was encouraged by Alberta Education at the time — they responded by saying that they have increased the CBE classroom funding to \$68 million, and today they announced three new school builds and one major modernization for the board.

As Bill 1 consultations with school boards has yet to occur, Bowen-Eyre said she's hopeful Alberta Education will take a look at their engagement information and "truly understand what Calgary parents want in their education system and getting their kids to and from school."

Alberta Education responded by saying they "will work with CBE every step of the way."

 **We heard from our parents a 2.4 km walk is too far.**

Joy Bowen-Eyre

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'I feel proud to be a Canadian'

CITIZENSHIP

Fifty people welcomed as new citizens in ceremony

Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

Rajiv Sharma could hardly keep the grin off his face.

The Nepalese native was one of 50 people who took the oath of citizenship at Deer Run Elementary School on Tuesday.

Before they took their oath, Judge Joseph Woodard reminded the packed gymnasium this would be a defining moment.

"Today really is one of the most important days of your life," Woodard said.

"You are becoming a new person with new opportunities, new hopes, new rights, and new duties. Something Canada truly makes possible," he continued.

A former social worker, Sharma said becoming a Canadian citizen marks another new start for his family. He started the official application process four years ago.

"I feel proud to be a Canadian," he said.

Sharma brought his wife and young son with him when he immigrated from Nepal to Calgary as a 'skilled worker,' a program which expedites the process for those ready to enter the Canadian workforce.

The family has grown by one since their arrival several years ago.

"I'm really excited to become a citizen," Sharma said.

Woodard called Canada a "great experiment in building

a single country of many cultures."

"What makes Canada truly unique is the opportunities Canada gives to all of its newcomers for a new life," he said, addressing the group directly.

"When you become Canada, Canada becomes part of you."

The Calgary Police Service's (CPS) Diversity Team also attended the ceremony, as well as Chief Roger Chaffin.

One program the team provides is education for newcomers about the Canadian legal system and how CPS operates, as well as the rights they are granted as citizens.

Just before they took the oath, Woodard encouraged the new citizens to get involved within their communities by volunteering, if they hadn't already.

"That's where we learn to become real Canadians," Woodard said.



Fifty new Canadians took the citizenship oath at Deer Run Elementary School on Tuesday.

ELIZABETH CAMERON/FOR METRO

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DEATH

McGrath family unable to find closure prior to court proceedings

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

Ryan McGrath says they've been doing what they can to keep the memory of their daughter Ceira alive in the family.

The woman accused of negligence causing death in the 2015 daycare death of Ceira Lynn McGrath prepares for her preliminary hearing Wednesday.

Ceira was found unresponsive at the unlicensed Silverado day home of accused, Elmarie Simons, in November 2015. Ceira and her twin brother Colby both spent their weekdays with Simons.

Ceira's father, Ryan McGrath, said it's been difficult for his

family — which still doesn't have closure.

"It must be with the pre-trial coming up, but a lot of the tough feelings are re-emerging around here. Sadness. Missing her," he said.

"Colby's at the age now where he's asking about her, so that's making it even more difficult. Life is just a struggle."

When Colby asks about his twin McGrath says they tell him his sister is in heaven, and every night they take time to say goodnight to her.

"Based on discussions we've had with our grief counsellor we're just trying to keep her in our life. Colby understands that



Ceira Lynn McGrath

CONTRIBUTED

she's dead, but that she's happy and in a good place," he said.

McGrath said what's made things even harder for his family is that they haven't yet seen Ceira's autopsy report or anything else of the like.

He said it's also been difficult for he and his wife to leave Colby with babysitters.

"We don't trust anybody that isn't family or friends, and we don't have any family in the city, and quite honestly, I don't want to ask friends anymore since we've withdrawn socially," said McGrath.

The family has been told it could be another year before the regular trial begins.

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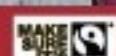
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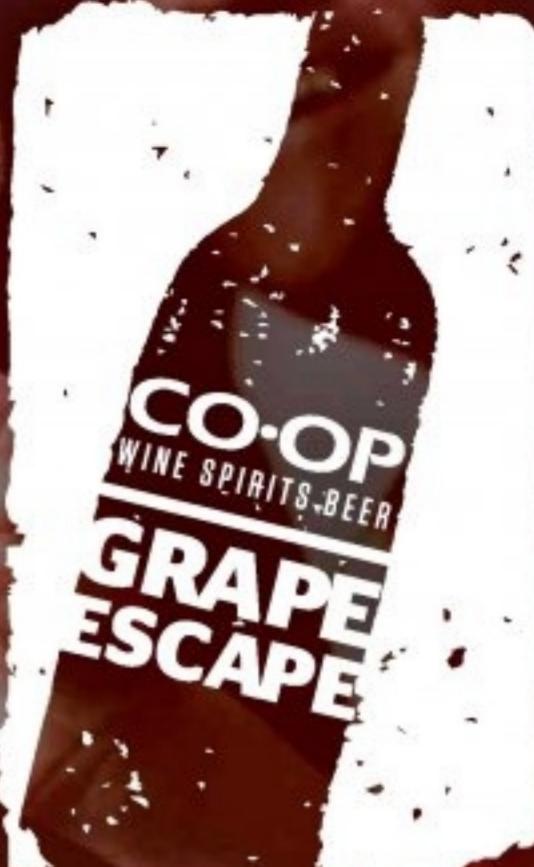
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Travis Huba, a plumber and pipefitter working on the New Central Library, signs his name on a steel beam that will feature as a time capsule in the building. ELIZABETH CAMERON/FOR METRO

Calgary signs off on new library

COMMUNITY

Public invited to mark beam as time capsule



Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

Travis Huba's work can be found throughout the New Central Library, but now there's a visual reminder of the passion that went into construction of the uniquely-shaped building.

The public was invited to help create a time capsule for the library in the form of a 9,000 kilogram steel beam on Tuesday. Hundreds of Calgarians signed their names and wrote messages to future readers.

"(The building isn't) just a square, and that's the kind of thing I like — the challenge of

it," the pipefitter and plumber said. "You don't really see anything else like this."

Huba, who also helped build the Southern Jubilee Auditorium, confessed construction workers often sign off on a project — just not where the public can see.

"Some guys write their names on the concrete or on access panels ... so this is cool to me that they're actually letting us sign it," he said.

He signed his initials, union number, and the name of the company he works for on the beam, which will be part of one of the building's five cross-braced steel trusses.

The last beam will be cemented by the end of April, and the build is on track to wrap up by 2018.

The next phase of the project is expected to take 16 months to complete. Crews will work from the bottom up to install

mechanical and electrical systems, drywall, flooring, and all the final touches that will bring the structure to life.

Lindsey Hritzuk stopped by on her lunch break and said she's happy Calgary is investing the next generation's future.

"I think it's wonderful that in times of economic downturn, we're still putting money into the arts and the infrastructure that supports arts literacy," she said.

Hritzuk left a message in honour of a close friend's child who passed away several years ago.

"I helped her make her mark on the world she didn't get to make herself," Hritzuk said.

"She loved books and was learning how to read and was really excited to go to school, but she never got that chance — if she had lived, I think she would have loved something like this."

CRIME

Sunwing pilot pleads guilty to being impaired on flight

A pilot has pleaded guilty to having control and care of an aircraft while impaired after passing out in a cockpit last year.

Miroslav Gronych was employed by Sunwing Airlines on a work visa from Slovakia. His flight was scheduled to leave Calgary with the final destination of Cancun, Mexico.

Gronych was found slumped over in his seat and was escorted off the plane. An agreed statement of facts read in court

Tuesday said his pilot's wings were attached upside down on his uniform and an empty bottle of vodka was discovered in his hotel room.

The statement said he was an hour late for his check-in because he said he became lost going through security.

Court heard Gronych struggled to hang up his coat when he got on the plane, and was slurring words and staggering.

The Crown asked the judge

for a one-year sentence and pointed to a similar case in the United States where the pilot received five years.

"The gravity of this offence is extremely high. Mr. Gronych put the lives of 105 people at risk," prosecutor Rose Greenwood said.

"Hopefully he will never be permitted to fly again."

Court heard the pilot has lost his job.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



The minds behind the Trump Tower escape room at Confined want YOU to help #MakeEscapeRoomsGreatAgain.

AARON CHATHA/METRO

Take Trump down in new escape room

ACTIVITIES

New game lets players try to break into Trump Tower

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Don't get trumped by Calgary's newest escape room — which gives players 60 minutes to take down America's 45th president.

Escape Trumps Tower, launched last week at Confined Escape Rooms, plays out a little differently from your usual escape room.

Instead of getting out — you're trying to get in.

The escape room begins with players entering the lobby of Trump Tower, where they find the security guard has left his station.

A message plays on the monitor, welcoming players to Trump Tower.

"Then, instantly, Bernie Sanders interrupts the feed," explained marketing manager Alyson Turnbull. "Your goal is to get through the lobby, into a security hallway and into Trump's personal office, and find whatever it is you need to take him down."

Planning for the room actually started last year, when

the owners envisioned an alternate universe where Trump gets elected and becomes a crazed despot in a post-apocalyptic world.

"Then he really was elected, and we had to change our whole plot," Turnbull laughed. "Truly, we couldn't even write this. It's so funny, because it's reality."

"We're Canadian, and when there's something where we don't have a lot of influence over, we try to just laugh about it, which I think is just the Canadian way."

She added the escape room was designed with good humour in mind. They hired a voice actor for Bernie Sanders, who will guide players through the room.

"Bernie just makes it easy to be a likable hero," said Turnbull.

The company likes to do something different for each room, she explained, ranging from horror, to using 3D paint and glasses for their Alice in Wonderland room.

The company gives regular hints to players through a monitor, as part of the experience, but Turnbull warns the more hardcore players (who refuse to take any help) that Escape Trumps Tower is a fairly difficult room.

It's also their only room for mature audiences only — 17 and above.

For more information, visit www.confined.ca.

“
Then he really was elected, and we had to change our whole plot.

Alyson Turnbull

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

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Trump helps cause surge

IMMIGRATION

Experts say xenophobic policies pushes many north

There were four times more asylum claimants arriving at land border crossings than at airports in the first two months of 2017, new Canadian data shows.

In January and February, a total of 525 air travellers — 400 in Ontario, 90 in Quebec, 35 in British Columbia and nine in Alberta — sought asylum upon arrival at airports, said the Canada Border Services Agency.

By contrast, 2,145 people crossed at official land border ports of entry and made refugee claims during the same period, including 1,085 in Quebec, 905 in Ontario, 80 in Manitoba, and 35 each in Alberta and British Columbia.

In addition to the migrants who made it through the border either legally or illegally and later filed what are known



An asylum claimant and her daughters cross the border into Quebec from the United States earlier this month. THE CANADIAN PRESS

as "inland" claims, Canada received claims from a total of 5,520 refugees in the two months — a 48 per cent increase from the same period a year ago. The numbers of claimants arriving at land bor-

der crossings and airports for the same period of 2016 were not immediately available.

Given Canada's geographical isolation and the popularity of the U.S. as a destination for migrants, experts say,

Ottawa historically received more refugees by air than at land borders.

Experts say the sudden rise can be attributed to the xenophobic policies of Donald Trump's administration as well

as Canada's implementation of the new electronic travel authorization that applies also to visa-exempt air passengers.

"(The) airport was the easiest way, but because of the visa requirements, it is becoming more difficult to travel here by air than by land, and it is easier to get a visa to the U.S. than to Canada," said Janet Dench of the Canadian Council for Refugees.

Dench said that in years past, the council received monthly statistics from the Immigration Department on asylum claims, before the former Conservative government stopped providing the information in 2010.

Dench cautioned that it is hard to make out any trend and explain the surge in land border claims based on two months of statistics because there could be other factors at play.

"It could be just a question of resource availability. The inland office may have fewer resources and can't give out as many appointments to take in asylum claims," Dench explained. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Justin Kuijer FACEBOOK

ONTARIO

Police capture man accused of killing stepson

The search is over for an Ontario man accused of fatally injuring his seven-year-old stepson moments before attempting to kill a local bank employee.

Niagara police Chief Jeff McGuire says 43-year-old Justin Kuijer was arrested by provincial police Tuesday in northern Ontario.

McGuire says the arrest in Kenora, Ont., came after a tip from a citizen.

A Canada-wide arrest warrant was issued Monday for Kuijer on charges of second-degree murder in the death of seven-year-old Nathan Dumas, as well as the attempted murder of a woman working at a local RBC branch.

Police alleged that Kuijer had been on the run in his ex-girlfriend's van ever since the two grisly scenes unfolded on Friday.

In a news release, Niagara regional police say the 2009 Pontiac Montana van was located in a parking lot with Kuijer alone inside. They say he was arrested without incident.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GOVERNMENT

Advocates applaud report on domestic, sexual violence



Ryan
Tumilty
Metro | Ottawa

Advocates are applauding a parliamentary report aimed at reducing domestic violence and sexual assault.

Tabled Monday by the House

committee on the Status of Women, the report calls for better training for police and judges, better data on the issue and more assault centres on university campuses.

In all, it contains 45 recommendations — the committee looked at the issue on university campuses, on the internet and

in the justice system.

Pam Damoff, Liberal MP for Oakville North-Burlington and vice-chair of the committee, said sexual violence is a major issue with a lot of problems to solve.

"It was a huge study, each one of these topics could have warranted a study on its own,"

she said.

The committee recommended better data collection, including having Statistics Canada collect information on sex-assault complaints that police deem unfounded for lack of evidence.

The agency stopped collecting such data from police

after raising concerns that officers were not using the category accurately. Erin Leigh, executive director of the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence against Women, said that's an important step, but the government has to ensure that officers are not just entering the data correctly but also treating victims right.



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Few Liberal measures for middle class have done much for the middle class

It would be nice if Wednesday's budget offered some real change

ANALYSIS


**Paul
Wells**

Torstar NewsService

Wednesday's budget will be about the middle class and innovation. Maybe it'll even be helpful! That would be nice. Unfortunately, the Trudeau government's handling of both files so far has left them in something close to a shambles.

I wrote after Social Development Minister Jean-Yves Duclos gave a presentation about "The State of the Middle Class." I was probably too kind.

When a tenured academic turned senior cabinet minister delivers a presentation on the middle class that (a) never defines the term "middle class"; (b) never depicts the effects of the government's actions to date on the plight of the middle class, however you want to define it; (c) offers no hint about future efforts to help the middle class — well, that's a fiasco.

The Liberals used to promise that Canadians would be able to track their own progress, using large numbers of publicly available indicators, on marvellous websites that would be part of a governing philosophy called "deliverology." These days, we get Duclos telling us how polls say we feel. But let no one criticize any Liberal emphasis on feelings. Bloomberg put the question to Bill Morneau, the finance minister, this week, and he was staunch in defending a politics of mood.

"We look at what's gone on around the world" (translator's note: this is every western politician's preferred euphemism for the election

of Donald Trump) "is there anybody who questions that we should be focused on how people feel?" Morneau asked. "What are the outcomes if we don't? So I think we're going to stay on that message."

OK then. I feel worried when I read Duclos's former colleague, the Université Laval economist Stephen Gordon, pointing out in the National Post what the NDP has been saying all along: that few Liberal measures for the middle class have done much for the middle class. Take what Justin Trudeau likes to call his "middle-class tax cut." Says Gordon: "The tax cut for the median tax filer — someone reporting total income somewhere around \$45,000 — is either negligible or non-existent." But if you make triple that income, you get the maximum tax benefit.

I feel like maybe we should move on to innovation. This government is the first with a minister for innovation! He's Navdeep Bains. He frequently posts photos of his meetings on Twitter, with the hashtag "#innovation."

A year and a half after he became the minister for #innovation, it's not clear what Bains's plans are. It's pretty clear that within the government he has less than complete control over #innovation.

Whatever Bains proposes, it will have company. Kevin Page, the former Parliamentary Budget Officer who now runs a policy shop at the University of Ottawa, found that there are already 147 programs and tax credits, worth a combined \$22.6 billion, designed to spur #innovation.

That's right now. Today. Already. The accumulated detritus of every former government.

OTTAWA

Four things to look for in Lib's budget

The Trudeau government will table the second budget of its mandate Wednesday.

Here are four things to look for in the budget:

1. Will Ottawa re-introduce a contingency reserve?

With so many unknowns tied to potential policy moves in the U.S. on taxes and trade, some economists predict the government will re-introduce a contingency reserve to provide

a cushion for Canada's books.

2. What will be the scope of the tax-expenditure review?

Sources say the review process is ongoing, meaning the budget will not include the full range of tax changes. However, it is expected to contain at least a few smaller tax adjustments.

3. How will the budget address gender gaps?

Morneau has promised to run his budget through a gender-based analysis. This year's analysis is expected to examine how some big budget themes will affect genders.

4. Will the government provide a timeline to bring the country's books to balance?

Last fall, Finance Minister Bill Morneau's fiscal statement projected a string of double-digit deficits until

at least 2021-2022, starting with a \$25.1-billion shortfall in 2016-17. Many economists have been urging the government to map out a timetable to eliminate the deficit. Morneau has instead focused on another so-called fiscal anchor, promising to lower the country's debt-to-GDP ratio — a measure of the public debt burden — by the end of the Liberal mandate.

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Laptop ban questioned

AIR TRAVEL

Reasons for latest change will likely never be public

You can thank Richard Reid, a.k.a. the failed "shoe bomber," every time you remove your footwear at airport security checks. The "underwear bomber" is why you have to rub your pants and get your palms swabbed for explosive residue. Limited liquid? A failed 2006 transatlantic aircraft plot.

But passengers, irate passengers, who will soon be barred from bringing laptops on their lengthy flights to the U.S. or U.K., will probably not be given a simple answer as to why. Flights to Canada may also soon be affected.

News of the surprise travel restriction began spreading Monday night and came into effect in the U.S. early Tuesday. Passengers travelling direct from eight mainly Middle Eastern countries to the U.S. will be forbidden from carrying on electronics larger than a cellphone. Airlines



U.S. and British governments are barring passengers on some flights from Middle Eastern and North African countries from bringing laptops and other devices in carry-ons. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

were told they have 96 hours to comply. By Tuesday afternoon, Britain said they were implementing similar restrictions on six countries in North Africa and the Middle East.

Federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau also said Tuesday that Canada may follow the lead of the U.S. and Britain in relation to unspecified security threats.

According to U.S. reports, the new measure is not based on any specific threat or being implemented as one of the re-

active security measures that have become common in the past 15 years after failed attacks.

Which leaves many to ask not only why but what are the actual security benefits?

"We don't know what the cause is. We don't know what the reason is. We don't know what is going on," said Bruce Schneier, a security technologist and fellow at Berkman Center.

As the story spread, so did the skepticism. A New York Times report Tuesday stated that the

+ IN CANADA

If Ottawa does not issue a similar ban,

Canadian airports are bound to get busier as passengers decide to bypass the hassle of U.S. travel. Emirates Airlines and Turkish and EgyptAir, among other airliners have frequent direct flights to Canadian cities.

new measure "was not based on any specific or credible threat of an imminent attack."

The TSA statement was vague, saying that the measure was based on "evaluated intelligence."

The only known attack using a laptop occurred over a year ago in Mogadishu. The East African Al Qaeda affiliate, Al Shabab, claimed responsibility for the bomb on board a Daallo Airlines flight, which blew a hole in the fuselage, sucking out the suspected bomber. The passenger jet was forced to make an emergency landing, but none of the other passengers were injured.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FINANCES

Wealthy people ask to pay more in taxes

Some of the wealthiest New Yorkers are asking the state to raise their taxes.

Eighty people including George Soros, Steven Rockefeller and Abigail Disney wrote to lawmakers and Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo saying they and other top earners should pay more to support schools, roads, bridges and programs to help poor and homeless residents of the state.

"Now is the time to invest in the long-term economic viability of New York," the letter reads. "We need to invest in pathways out of poverty and up the economic ladder for all of our fellow



George Soros THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

citizens, including strong public education from pre-K to college. And, we need to invest in the fragile bridges, tunnels, waterlines, public buildings, and roads that we all depend on."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GLOBAL DIGEST

'Piggy bank' turtle dies

Tourists used to toss coins at a green sea turtle that lived in a pond in Thailand, wishing for luck and longevity. But swallowing the tidbits turned out to be a death sentence, as after having nearly a thousand coins removed from its stomach two weeks ago, the turtle died Tuesday. AP

Bumblebee joins endangered species

The rusty patched bumblebee on Tuesday became the first officially endangered bee species in the continental U.S. Its listing means the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will devise a plan for returning the imperiled bee to "a healthy and secure condition." AP

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metrO VIEWS

Your essential daily news

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

JESSICA ALLEN ON CONSPIRACY THEORIES



Here is a truncated list of things that, if you believe them, will make me take you less seriously: the Earth is flat, vaccinations are part of a government plot, and Barack Obama wire-tapped Trump Tower.

Conspiracy theories conform to fit different personal ideologies: look at the permutations of 9/11 theories, ranging from anti-Semitic to anti-New World Order down to versions that confirm people's desires to live in a world where Nostradamus was right about everything.

We're predisposed to believe what we want to believe; only in the past, you had to work to confirm those beliefs — like reading all 888 pages of the Warren Report. Now, you just have to search, click, and watch.

Except for me, because I obviously don't believe in conspiracy theories — OK, except for this one really awesome one: Donald Trump is in cahoots with a Russian oligarch who goes by the nickname "the fertilizer king."

Dmitry Rybolovlev, who made his billions selling potash, was tied up in the most expensive divorce in modern history, bought a house from Will Smith, the Greek island where Jackie Onassis wed Aristotle, and an estate in Palm Beach, Florida — from Trump.

I know all of this because I've fallen down a Rybolovlev rabbit hole, for which I blame Rachel Maddow. The MSNBC host has been trying to connect the dots between

'I obviously don't believe in conspiracy theories — OK, except for this one really awesome one.'



So Shaq is pretty sure the Earth is flat. Who among us can resist a juicy conspiracy theory? asks Jessica Allen. AP

Trump, Rybolovlev, and U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.

Long story short, as told by Maddow: Trump sold the Palm Beach mansion to the Russian for \$50 million (U.S.) more than he'd paid for it just four years earlier. The sale came as Rybolovlev was embroiled in big bucks divorce proceedings, and Trump owed millions to Deutsche Bank, which was fined for money laundering some \$10 billion dollars, some of which belonged to Putin family members. When the CEO of Deutsche bank stepped down post scandal, he went to the Bank of Cyprus. Guess who once owned a stake in the Bank of Cyprus? Rybolovlev. Guess who was once vice chairman of the Bank of Cyprus? Wilbur Ross.

Boom!

But this line of logic led Sonny Bunch in a Washington Post column to compare Maddow to the Oliver Stone character X, played by Kiefer Sutherland, in 1991 film JFK. "This is how conspiracy theorists operate," he said. "Bury your opponent in an

avalanche of facts and suggest there's some secret connecting them all together, a Rosetta Stone you're on the verge of deciphering."

If Maddow is X, then I am the cartoonist, played by Jake Gyllenhaal in David Fincher's 2007 thriller Zodiac, who became an amateur detective trying to crack one of the most notorious serial killer cases ever. I spent all of Sunday drawing diagrams and pie charts trying to piece this Russian doll of a puzzle together. Simon watched me, his partner of 13 years who will smugly cite a study in polite conversation on how those who believe in conspiracies are more likely to score lower in intelligence tests, and asked: Who are you?

I don't know, but I feel pretty confident that I'm becoming my worst nightmare.

And I can't stop.

I won't stop — because there are reports that Rybolovlev's private plane has landed at the same time and place as Trump's on at least four occasions (Thanks, crooksandliars.com. Also, why am I reading crooksandliars.com?)

What if this Russia-Trump

FBI dossier legitimately connects the dots because the truth is out there? What if the dots pinpoint Trump as the Zodiac killer? What if Shaquille O'Neal is right and the Earth really is flat?

Even though the mansion Trump sold Rybolovlev is called "The House of Friendship," which even Oliver Stone couldn't make up, Rachel Maddow and I need to tread carefully.

We are living in a world that doesn't make sense. Maybe every age says this, but ours has actually been dubbed the "post truth age."

Jonathan Vance, a University of Western Ontario history professor who specializes in panic and paranoia, theorized to the Canadian Press that "we think that our society is so developed that bad things shouldn't happen." So when they do occur — even organically — we seek scapegoats.

"Conspiracy absolves us of responsibility and it absolves us of the fickle hand of fate," he told the news agency.

There is a glimmer of hope, though, that society is taking up its responsibility. And it comes from an unlikely place: Trump. In his war on the mainstream media, he has, in an ironic twist, boosted the subscription numbers of the "failing" New York Times.

That a man who has successfully twisted a term once used to describe actual fake news and made it a catch-all sobriquet for institutional journalism might inadvertently be the saviour of newspapers in America is almost enough to make you believe anything.

Cue conspiracy.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

VICKY MOCHAMA

Budget should support private refugee sponsors

The decades-old private sponsorship program is unique in both form and tradition.

But without sufficient money and resources, the agency that manages it is struggling with a backlog of potential sponsors, and leaving Canada in danger of breaking its global promise.

As the federal budget comes down in Ottawa, this should be a top priority.

The global migrant crisis is, with or without our help, finding a way into our country.

While the right and humane thing is for Canada to match rhetoric with policy, there is one more reason to spend the money to clear the backlog: private sponsorship works.

Speaking in front of the Commons immigration committee Monday, Minister Ahmed Hussen said 53 per cent of privately-sponsored refugees had found full-time employment. For government-sponsored refugees that number is 10 per cent, he said.

Supported by the community around them, refugees are finding jobs faster than those assisted mostly by bureaucrats and agencies. The private sponsorship system allows families and community groups to pool their will, compassion and resources to help refugee families.

There are approximately 6,000 such sponsors awaiting approval by the federal government to be matched with a refugee family.

It thus came as a surprise to many families, churches, businesses and community groups to find that in mid-December, the department of citizenship

and immigration quietly put a cap of 1,000 on the number of new applicants looking to sponsor Syrian and Iraqi refugees in 2017. Some groups had been prepared to sponsor multiple families.

The change to the private sponsorship system for Syrian and Iraqi refugees was meant to ease the backlog in processing applications. Months later, the backlog persists.

At the same time that the Immigration and Refugee Board is battling a stack of applications, the government has increased the overall number of privately-sponsored refugees that it plans to allow this year from elsewhere in the world. This year, Canada is planning for a high of 19,000 privately sponsored refugees.

The agency anticipates the situation will deteriorate. It foresees as many as 30,000 claims languishing. Wait times, which refugees and their advocates say are already lengthy, will double.

Speaking to The Canadian Press, the chairman of IRB was frank that the board was doing its best but it needed more help, saying, "efficiency has increased significantly, but there is no way we can deal with 30,000 cases when we're funded for about 17,000."

Supported and embraced, refugee families are integrating. Canadian communities have shown that they are willing to do their part in the global migrant crisis.

The private sponsorship system is a workable extension of the generosity that we proclaim.

It's time for Ottawa to put the money in and figure it out.

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Why frozen is the new fresh

FOOD TRENDS

Our false idea of 'freshness' causes too much waste

Genna Buck
Metro | Toronto

When Karyl Agana looks in her home freezer, only one thing belongs to her: A package of salmon.

Like so many self-described foodies, the 28-year-old finance assistant prefers to buy nearly all her fruits, vegetables and meats fresh.

"I enjoy food a lot," she said. "I go out looking for great tasting food. And I make it look pleasing."

Agana aims to make four beautiful meals a week; sourcing ingredients from her Toronto neighbourhood's abundance of grocery stores and ethnic markets.

But inevitably, some of it gets wasted: About once a month, she goes through her fridge and throws away a full

grocery bag of spoiled produce. And she's never been one to cook and freeze for later — she said she has nothing against it; it's just not what she grew up doing.

She's far from alone. According to Tamara Soma, who studies food waste at the University of Toronto's Food Systems Lab, Canadians spend a collective \$107 billion per year on food that never gets eaten, including the cost of fuel and water.

Why? Because, she said, we're obsessed with a false ideal of freshness.

"We're so detached. We've lost that whole connection between production, processing and consumption," Soma said. "We gravitate toward the idea of freshness to become comfortable with the unknowns. Fresh means healthy, fresh

means good."

Meanwhile, frozen food gets a bad rap it doesn't deserve. It's picked at peak season and preserved right away, unlike, say, grocery-store bananas, which are picked green, stored for many days, shipped across the world and ripened with ethylene gas, Soma said.

"The idea that they're fresh is quite a paradox," she added. "Fresh is a marketing concept."

And our obsession with it is costing us. The typical North American fridge (unlike European fridges, which are a bit smaller) is an "enabler as a food waste," Soma said. "We stock it up and forget about it. We buy doubles of the same thing. It's a compost bin."

But the freezer is a powerful weapon against waste. Take herbs, for example: Most people buy a huge bunch but



Tamara Soma. CONTRIBUTED

only use a few leaves, leaving the rest to rot.

Soma recommends pureeing them with olive oil and freezing them in ice-cube trays for an instant way to perk up pasta dishes and soups.

Sure, frozen fruits and vegetables can be a bit watery and mushy, which grosses some people out. But in things like soups and smoothies, you'll hardly notice.

"The more standards imposed on the food, the more opportunities there are for it to be wasted," Soma said. "It's time to implement a new measure of freshness that's simple: 'Does it smell good? Does it look edible?'"

I enjoy food a lot. I go out looking for great tasting food. And I make it look pleasing.

Foodie but non-freezer Karyl Agana



+ FREEZE TO THE MAX EXPERT TIPS

Leanne Brown, author of *Good and Cheap*, a cookbook designed to help people on public assistance make cheap, nutritious meals gives her top tips:

Buy frozen and canned in the off-season

"You might think fresh is best, but for flavour reasons and cost reasons, pay attention to season. Fresh tomatoes right now are basically trash."

Compare prices in-store

Food prices fluctuate. "It would be nice if there were set rules; if canned and

frozen were always cheaper. They're often not."

Cook and freeze a staple

"It's as simple as making a big pot of a really inexpensive staple like beans or lentils and having that be the centre of a taco meal, and then as a side another night."

Don't use your freezer as a dumping ground

"I've made too large a portion of something and I'm sick of it. Usually it is going to the freezer to die. Label it when you put it in there."



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Panko and bread crumbs are interchangeable in cooking. However, panko has a flakier, more delicate texture and is made predominantly from white bread crumbs without the crust. Regular bread crumbs can come from a variety of breads and have a finer texture. While they are fairly similar in terms of calories and fat, these plain bread crumbs have an excessive amount of sodium compared to the panko. Add an extra crunch to your dishes with panko and save on sodium!

Say it ain't dough: raw treat is a risk

FOOD SAFETY

Sweet trend is hot right now but cold batter can do damage

Genna Buck
Metro | Toronto



and E. coli outbreaks have been linked to the consumption of raw flour, too.

So ask about safety before indulging in the nostalgic-fuelled cookie dough craze. Toronto's Junked Food Co., which started scooping cones of cookie dough earlier this month — and is already going through 600 pounds of the sweet stuff every weekend — uses only pasteurized eggs and heats the flour to 160 C to kill any harmful bugs that might be lurking, co-owner Brian McKilligan said.

If you want to be super-safe, the lemon flavour is totally egg-free.

The restaurant also has pints of dough available to take away — so there is the option to, you know, actually bake it and make cookies.

It's every kid's dream: Licking gooey, sugary cookie dough straight off the spoon or beater.

But beware: Trendy restaurants and cafés serving raw cookie dough could be doling out a dangerous dose of harmful bacteria as well. Uncooked or undercooked eggs could be contaminated with salmonella,

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Junked Food Co. in Toronto went through pounds of cookie dough this month, serving it like ice cream, in what's being dubbed a new dessert craze. INSTAGRAM/JUNKEDFOODCO

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²On average, based on a comparison of 2016 Aeroplan flight reward bookings against actual market base fares and leading financial institutions' travel rewards programs' terms and conditions. ³Welcome Bonus of 15,000 Aeroplan Miles ("Welcome Bonus Miles") will be awarded to the Aeroplan Member account associated with the TD Aeroplan Visa Infinite Card Account ("Account") only after the first purchase is made on the Account. To receive the additional 10,000 Aeroplan Miles, you must also: (a) apply for an Account between March 6, 2017, and June 14, 2017; (b) make \$1,000 in purchases on your Account, including your first purchase, within 90 days of Account approval. To receive the additional 5,000 Aeroplan Miles for adding an Authorized User to your Account ("Authorized User Bonus"), you must: (a) apply for an Account and add an Authorized User between March 6, 2017, and June 14, 2017; and (b) Authorized User must call and activate their Card by July 31, 2017. You can have a maximum of three (3) Authorized Users on your Account but you will only receive 1 (one) 5,000 Authorized User Bonus Aeroplan Miles offer. Annual Fee for each Authorized User Card added to the Account will apply. The Primary Cardholder is responsible for all charges to the Account, including those made by any Authorized User. If you have opened an Account in the last 6 months, you will not be eligible for these offers. We reserve the right to limit the number of Accounts opened by and the number of miles awarded to any one person. Your Account must be in good standing at the time bonus miles are awarded. Please allow 8 weeks after the conditions for each offer are fulfilled for the miles to be credited to your Aeroplan member account. Offers may be changed, withdrawn or extended at any time and cannot be combined with any other offer unless otherwise specified. These miles are not eligible for Aeroplan status. All trademarks are property of their respective owners. ⁴The Air Canada maple leaf logo and Air Canada are registered trademarks of Air Canada, used under license. ⁵The Aeroplan logo and Aeroplan are registered trademarks of Air Canada Inc. ⁶The TD logo and other trademarks are the property of The Toronto-Dominion Bank.



For every dish that gets a thousand likes on Instagram, there are dozens that don't come close but that shouldn't cause you heartburn — even professional chefs get it wrong. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Exploding eggs and horrified friends

KITCHEN CATASTROPHES

Even the best cooks have an off day; here's some of worst

Karon Liu
life@metronews.ca

For every dish that makes it onto Instagram, there are a few duds better off in the garbage.

Last year, while researching our annual cookie calendar, I spent more than a week trying to make macarons. I over-whipped my first batch and got grainy egg whites, and under-whipped the next, resulting in meringue pancakes. Oven fans blew the fragile tops off another batch, and then while tapping the tray of piped meringues on the table to get rid of air bubbles, I missed the table altogether. Needless to say, they never made it onto Instagram.

But hey, no one is perfect and at least I got a good story out of my attempts. With that in mind, we asked readers to share their harrowing tales of home cooking fails. Here are the best of the worst.

1 Zombie Sushi
(Danny Bernard, 30)
My friends and I take turns

making dinners for each other monthly. I like sushi so I thought I would give it a go. I thought I didn't need short (grain) rice and it turns out the avocado wasn't ripe enough. "Looks like a dead body thrown in a tarp," one of my friends commented. "Rice looks like maggots." My friends luckily rain-checked me. I learned from this, and the next week I got it together ... mostly.

2 Taste (and glass) explosion
(Edythe Yee, 46)

There was a glass explosion in my friend's kitchen when we were frying a bunch of food last year. The bowl was filled with glaze and was sitting on the counter in the kitchen next to my sour cream lemon cake doughnuts and my sour cherry fritter batter, both waiting their turn in the deep fryer, which was outside. We heard a loud bang and when we went to investigate, we saw glass shards everywhere: all over the counter, the next counter over, and all over the floor. We had to toss all the doughnuts, batter and the other glaze. The glaze was sitting by itself at room temperature in an air-conditioned kitchen so we don't know why it randomly exploded. No one got hurt but we were

very, very sad.

3 Thanks for the endorsement

(Corrie Pollock, 30)

I just had to send you a photo of the "60-second microwave cookie" I attempted a while ago. Not pictured: a cookie explosion all over the microwave's ceiling. This didn't stop me from trying your (microwave) mug cake recipe, which turned out absolutely perfect.

4 Slippery pie
(Susan Gow, 72)

In 1963, I left Quebec City and went to Soest, Germany, as a new bride with my husband who was serving in the Canadian army as part of the NATO forces. My new home was a small flat in a shared German home with not much kitchen equipment. I had a two-burner portable stove top and a steel-framed "glass box" for a stove that sat on a small wooden table with the burner. No matter, I had my trusty Fannie Farmer Cookbook with me that I received as a wedding present. I made a beautiful apple pie and proudly served it to my husband. He bit into it, looked puzzled, but polished it off in no time. "Wow," he gasped, "That was some slippery pie. How did you make it? I could

hardly keep it on my fork." To my horror I realized I read the recipe wrong. Instead of adding vegetable shortening, lard, or butter I added all three ingredients. All these years later, I still get teased about the slippery pie.

5 Mother knows best

(Nicole Willett, 38)

Bam! Then another. Bam! Bam! I counted a dozen. "Hide!" my mom said. A few minutes later, she grabbed a baseball bat and with a "follow me" we ventured into the kitchen. I was 8 years old when I learned that when you boil eggs and all the water evaporates, they explode and sound like a gunshot. Mom put the bat down and we spent the evening scraping splattered egg from the ceiling, floor, cabinets and stove. My mom was notorious for her kitchen fails. The pizza delivery place knew her voice and order by memory. A few years before she passed, she left me with a prized possession: A Betty Crocker cookbook with the following inscription:

Merry Christmas! Since you don't have a person to refer to when it comes to cooking, I thought you would use this! xoxo Mom.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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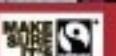


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Wyclef Jean 'appalled' at case of mistaken identity

MUSIC

Singer releases video of police detaining him in Hollywood



Andrew Fifield
Metro | Toronto

Los Angeles County sheriff's officials are apologizing to Grammy-winning singer Wyclef Jean who was detained after being mistaken for an armed robbery suspect.

Sheriff's officials said in a statement Tuesday afternoon that while they apologize for the inconvenience, Jean was lawfully stopped by deputies looking for a violent armed robber whose victims described a similar vehicle and article of clothing.

The 47-year-old R&B star tweeted a video of him in handcuffs while flashing squad car lights illuminated him and the arresting officers early Tuesday.

"That's what's going on right now with Wyclef in L.A. right now," he says to the camera. "The LAPD have me in cuffs for absolutely nothing."

The singer adds he was returning home from a record-



Wyclef Jean is "appalled at the behaviour" of the LAPD during the incident. AP/FILE

“

I said my name and told them they have the wrong person.

Wyclef Jean

ing studio.

In later tweets, the Haitian-born artist says he was not given a chance to explain the situation before he was handcuffed.



SEE WYCLEF'S VIDEO
metronews.ca

"I was asked by the police to put my hands up, then I was told 'do not move,'" he wrote. I was instantly handcuffed before being asked to identify myself.

"I said my name and told them they have (the) wrong person. They proceeded to ignore me and I was treated like a criminal until other police

showed up and pointed they had the wrong person."

Jean said on Twitter that he was "appalled at this behaviour."

A man believed to be the correct suspect was later arrested. Police say that a gun and a stolen wallet were recovered.
WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

True heroism is found in the modesty of this band of brothers

THE SHOW: Band of Brothers, Episode 7 (HBO)

THE MOMENT: "I withstood it well, but..."

The World War II US paratroopers of Easy Company just fought a hellish winter battle in Bastogne, Belgium — freezing cold, constant shelling, trees and bodies blown to splinters. One of the real men who endured it, now a white-haired senior, speaks in a to-camera interview.

"You don't have a chance when your friends go down, you know, to really take care of them as you might," he says. As he speaks, his voice thickens. His eyes fill with tears. He has to keep licking his lips because his mouth dries up.

"I withstood it well, but I had a lot of trouble in later life, because those events would come back." A barely contained sob



Steven Spielberg's series now resonates even more. CONTRIBUTED

fills his voice as he adds, "And you never forget them."

HBO's older series are avail-

able on demand right now, so I was happy to catch up with this 10-parter from Steven Spiel-

berg and Tom Hanks, based on Stephen Ambrose's book.

It took me a few hours to realize its genius: It's not about individual characters. The men who speak to camera aren't identified until the final episode. The actors playing them are hard to tell apart.

But that's the point. This show is about the idea of comradeship — about throwing your person into service for the collective, about making all bodies into one body, about caring for others more than yourself.

That's a rare idea in our age of hyper-individuality, even rarer now than it was in 2001 when this show was made. The modesty is the heroism.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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SEAN PLUMMER

Superman may fight for truth, justice and the American way, but he was born to a Canadian.

Cartoonist Joe Shuster, the child of Dutch and Ukrainian parents and the cousin of Frank Shuster — one half of the Canadian comedy duo Wayne and Shuster — was born and spent his first decade in Toronto.

It was there that he developed his artistic skills, drawing on the backs of discarded wallpaper rolls (back when paper was expensive) and earning money as a newspaper boy for the Toronto Daily Star, later the Toronto Star.

He met writer and future collaborator Jerry Siegel in high school when both were 17 and living in Cleveland. The pair started working together and continued after graduation, coming up with what became Superman in the early '30s.

Shuster modeled the Metropolis cityscape after Toronto, while Clark Kent's newspaper, The Daily Planet, was originally named The Daily Star, after Shuster's old employer. Writer Mordecai Richler once called Superman "a perfect expression of the Canadian psyche."



Canadian cartoonist Joe Shuster is known for co-creating the DC Comics character Superman. PHOTOS TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The true north

In practical terms, the top of the (habitable) world is Alert, Nunavut.

The military outpost is located on the northernmost tip of Ellesmere Island, which is just 807 km distant from the North Pole.

It was named after the HMS Alert, a Royal Navy sloop that was the first ship to make it to the top of Ellesmere Island, in 1875. Darkness and daylight each last five months, with a month of normal days and nights in between. **SEAN PLUMMER**



Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Major General Glynne Hines and Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor in Alert, Nunavut. PHOTOS TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A park bigger than Switzerland



It was created by Parks Canada in 1922 to protect the north's largest remaining herd of roaming wood bison.

Today Wood Buffalo National Park, which straddles the border between Northern Alberta and the southern Northwest Territories, protects a large swath

of the Northern Boreal Plains. How large, you ask? It is Canada's biggest national park, taking up more land than all of Switzerland.

It was designated a World UNESCO Heritage Site in 1983, and wood bison continue to roam there.

SEAN PLUMMER

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Waltzing into new career

DANCES WITH GOATS

Pair go from professional dancers to goat-cheese farmers

Shelley Boettcher

Craig Sanok started as a professional ballet dancer. But he's since waltzed his way into a new career — cheese maker and goat farmer.

When his busy season ramps up this spring, Sanok will be getting up at 6 a.m. every day, seven days a week, to milk his goats. Then, around 7 p.m., he will milk them all again.

He and his partner Paul Chambers, also a former dancer, are the founders of Dancing Goats Farm, a farm-based goat-cheese operation north of Calgary, near Acme, Alberta. Using milk from their herd of 34 goats,



Craig Sanok and Paul Chambers, founders of Dancing Goats Farm. CONTRIBUTED

make, market, sell and deliver their handcrafted cheeses to some of Calgary's top food retailers and restaurants.

"The response to our cheese has been amazing," Sanok says. "People really like knowing where their food comes from."

They currently produce four cheeses, each named

for a dance, a nod to their previous lives. The bestseller, Waltz, is a soft cheese. The Gavotte is a surface-ripened French-inspired cheese. The Two-Step is a semi-firm beer-washed cheese. And the Foxtrot is a mild, firm cheese with a natural rind. In July, they'll launch a

fifth creation, Bolero, a richly flavoured firm cheese.

Born in the U.S., Sanok criss-crossed the globe for 14 years as a dancer, performing with the Pittsburgh Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

de Montreal and others. After retiring from the stage, Sanok worked at Janice Beaton Fine Cheese and Peasant Cheese, where he honed his knowledge of all things fromage.

But he didn't decide to actually make the stuff until a visit with his sister-in-law. She was milk-

+ CHECK IT OUT

Find Dancing Goats Farm cheese at Peasant Cheese Shop, Sunnyside Natural Market, The Cookbook Co. Cooks, Forage Farm to Table and Say Cheese Fromagerie. Dancing Goats cheese is also on the menu at restaurants including The Farmer's House, Cibo, Hayloft, Notable, The Nash and Whitehall. Find out more by searching "Dancing Goats Farm" on Facebook.

ing a neighbour's goats and Sanok tagged along. When they returned home, he made a simple cheese with the milk. It turned out so well that when he came home, he started planning a proper goat-cheese operation in Alberta.

That was almost six years ago. While the days are long, Sanok finds his new career rewarding. "I'm having a blast," he says. "Working with the cheese and with the goats — this

is exactly what I want to be doing."

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THIS SPECIAL REPORT WAS CREATED BY CONTENT SOLUTIONS, INDEPENDENT OF METRO EDITORIAL.

Finally, an affordable electric



REVIEW

A low range almost doesn't factor at this price point


Dan Ilika
AutoGuide.com

It's unlikely this is what Hyundai had in mind for the media drive of the all-new Ioniq Electric, the brand's first real attempt at breaking into the slow-selling EV market.

What this entails is an unexpected bout of unseasonably bad weather in Kelowna, B.C. It's not unrealistic to expect temperatures around 8 C this time of year in the Okanagan Valley; instead it's about -5 C and snowing, with some freezing rain mixed in. This poses obvious problems.

Cold weather is the enemy of electric vehicles. From its effects on the battery to the additional energy needed to run the car's climate control system, range is reduced in a big way when the mercury plunges. Yet here we are, ready to set out on a journey intended to cover about 113 kilometres, or a little more than half the estimated range of the Ioniq Electric. Only our tester

isn't showing anywhere near the range the car is capable of despite efforts to top up the charge.

Packing a 28-kWh battery, the Hyundai Ioniq Electric is good for an estimated 200 km of driving. That's barely better than the aging Nissan Leaf (172 km), which was introduced way back in 2010, and almost half the range of the all-new Chevrolet Bolt (383 km), though the Bolt's battery boasts twice the capacity.

Setting out for our drive from a snow-covered parking lot, the car's estimated range of about 169 km is looming.

Parlaying power from the battery to the front wheels is an electric motor and a single-speed reduction gear transmission, while a set of regenerative brakes can send energy back to the battery. While the Ioniq Electric is hampered somewhat by the additional heft of its beefy battery, the torque from the electric motor helps to disguise it and makes the car feel nimble.

The Ioniq Electric may not compare to the likes of the Chevy Bolt — or the pending Tesla Model 3 — when it comes to range, but it has it beat when it comes to price. Base models are expected to start at \$35,000.

Ending our drive, our tester is still showing nearly 80 km of range remaining. Hyundai's first all-electric offering impresses, even in the cold winter weather.

THE CHECKLIST | 2017 HYUNDAI IONIQ ELECTRIC REVIEW

THE BASICS

Engine: Single motor drive unit
Output: 120 horsepower, 215 pound-feet of torque
Transmission: Single-speed reduction gear
Battery size: 28 kWh
Estimated range: 200 kilometres
Price: Starts at \$35,000 (est.) (before available incentives)



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Put the brakes on these five bad habits

ETIQUETTE

Kick these habits to make the roads safer for everyone

Louis MacPherson
AutoGuide.com

For many, the automobile is the paragon of independence. Behind the wheel, a driver is a slave to no one. Except that's not always true.

Motorists are slaves to their own driving shortcomings as well as the bad habits of others on the road.

Having driven more than 2.5 million miles before my 50th birthday, I have witnessed more than my fair share of bad driving. My experience has shown me there are five main behaviours that put ourselves and others at risk on the roads.

Being unaware of your surroundings

Without question, the main issue is an unawareness of one's surroundings — from this all



Road warrior MacPherson shares the five worst chronic driving habits he's observed in his time behind the wheel. ISTOCK

else flows. Observe the number of drivers who look up only to discover a car carrier, garbage truck, bus, etc. has magically appeared in their sightline, despite having been easily within view from several hundred

metres away. Anyone who has spent a logistics career on the road will confirm that the more a driver focuses on the horizon, the more anticipatory their driving becomes. Being aware negates the

need for excessively hard braking, erratic lane changes and the resultant consequences that drive everyone on the road crazy.

Improper braking

Most people do not know how

to brake. If their gaze falls only as far as the hood ornament on their car, I can confidently predict how they'll brake — suddenly — and how often they'll need to have brakes and rotors replaced or serviced. Not to mention the high probability that they'll inevitably end up in a rear-end collision.

The poorer your grasp of the horizon, the poorer and more erratic your braking and the greater the likelihood that another driver will rear end you. Brake smoothly and with moderation.

Not using turn signals

People who don't use turn signals are not lazy, they're indifferent — which is worse. In other aspects of life, we communicate our intentions so why should the turn signal be different?

In their most basic use, they are a courtesy. To use them is so simple, yet it's an action that is universally recognized as charitable, prudent and infinitely safer.

The use of turn signals are, perhaps, the greatest automotive example of reciprocity. Crossing any lane without signaling is not only dangerous, it is the equivalent of trespassing.

Bad turn signal courtesy

This behaviour is somewhat a continuance of turn signal courtesy. Drivers should always signal first (and with adequate notice), brake second.

All three previous examples of poor driver etiquette collide with alarming consequences for the driver behind you caught off guard. Once again, you are telegraphing your intentions to those on the road who may or may not be paying attention.

Giving as much advanced notice as possible will mitigate the need for drivers behind you to risk sudden lane changes or slam on the breaks.

Not turning into your correct lane

Perhaps nothing impedes the flow of traffic more at an intersection than people who do not turn into the correct lane. To watch two automobiles, each coming from opposing directions, harmoniously turn into their correct lane is a thing of breathtaking beauty. It is automotive ballet.

The conclusion is clear. The more we aspire and commit to being disciplined drivers, the more we make driving safer and more pleasurable for everyone.

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NO FUN

New report confirms that car buyers are boring people



White has been the best selling shade since 2011 and last year it accounted for 37 per cent of vehicle sales globally. ISTOCK

Dan Ilika
AutoGuide.com

Apparently the auto market is increasingly looking like an eight-bit greyscale, with the vast majority of new vehicles sold these days finished in a less-than-exciting quartet of colours.

That's according to a report from paint supplier Axalta, which found that an astonishing 77 per cent of cars, trucks and SUVs sold in 2016 were finished in white, silver, grey

and black. If there ever was a barometer of just how boring car-buyers have become this is it.

White led the way at 37 per cent of global sales, trailed by black at 18 per cent. Grey and silver followed at 11 per cent each. Worse still, 2016 marked the sixth consecutive year white was the No. 1 seller, which overtook silver in 2011. Line them all up and it's like our parking lots are stuck in the movie Pleasantville. (If you understand this obscure reference then you will understand how sad the

situation is.)

The picture is a slightly less bleak one in North America, with red (10 per cent) and blue (eight per cent) adding a splash of colour to the mix, though white, black, grey and silver still led the way on the continent by a landslide.

There is, however, some reprieve on the horizon. Axalta says "colourful hues are tinting traditional neutral colors" to bring colour back into vogue. Here's to a slightly darker shade of burnt orange coming soon to a dealer near you.

Outdated technology inspiring innovation

HYUNDAI

Patent filed for innovative three-cylinder engine

Jason Siu
AutoGuide.com

Hyundai has filed a patent for a three-cylinder engine with some very interesting technology.

The patent application was filed on November 30, 2015 but was published on March 16, 2017. In it, the Korean automaker details a three-cylinder engine where two of the cylinders perform four-cycle combustion while the remaining cylinder is two-cycle combustion. Essentially it's a combined-cycle combustion engine in hopes of improving fuel efficiency, among other things.

However, since the three-



The Korean automaker has plans for a combined-cycle combustion engine that will improve fuel efficiency. HANDOUT

cylinder engine has structural characteristics in which bores, strokes, and valve timings of the respective cylinders are equal to one another, the engine generates noise and vibration compared to typical four or more

cylinder engines," the patent application says. "To resolve this, it is necessary to devise a design technique for three-cylinder engines in which a three-cylinder engine combines a four-cycle with a two-cycle. In addition,

since engine performance (for example, power and torque) is deteriorated when this combined cycle engine is controlled, merchantable quality of the engine may be lowered."

It appears Hyundai is looking to solve the deterioration by combining two- and four-cycle cylinders. Since the bore, stroke and valve timing of the two-cycle cylinder can differ from the four-cycle cylinder, the same power is generated in the two- and four-cycle cylinders, preventing engine performance from dropping when the three-cylinder engine is operated under the combined cycles. It also maintains the advantages of a three-cylinder engine, mainly its compact structure and high fuel efficiency.

Expect to see more three-cylinder engines being developed by automakers in the coming years. The new Ford Fiesta ST for example, uses a three-cylinder EcoBoost engine to generate 200 horsepower and 214 pound-feet of torque.

TECHNOLOGY

Ford's Pedestrian Detection system gets night vision

Ford has improved its Pedestrian Detection technology so that it now works at night.

According to a new poll commissioned by Ford, night blindness and fear of hitting someone top night-time driving fears and the American automaker is hoping its latest technology helps alleviate those worries. The new technology is designed to detect pedestrians at night and then automatically apply the brakes if the driver does not respond to initial warnings.

In order to get Pedestrian Detection to work at night for the first time, the development team worked at night by sending life-sized dummies into the path of vehicles on closed tracks. The system was also tested on public roads in busy cities including Paris and Amsterdam.

So how does it all work? Basically, the system processes information from a radar located in the bumper and a windshield-mounted camera through a database of "pedestrian shapes" to distinguish people from objects

like road signs and trees. According to Ford, the camera delivers over 30 snapshots every second, and the video live feed and wide viewing angle allows the system to see pedestrians, even in low-light conditions.

In North America, the technology will first debut on the 2018 Ford F-150 and Ford Mustang models, while Europeans will first see it on the next-generation Ford Fiesta that debuted at the 2017 Geneva Motor Show last week.

"We know some drivers find hitting the road at night a stressful experience. Especially driving in towns and cities, pedestrians — sometimes distracted by mobiles — can without warning step into the road, leaving even alert drivers very little time to avoid an accident," said Gregor Alexi, active safety engineer, Ford of Europe. "Day and night, Pedestrian Detection is designed to help identify people already in — or about to step into — the road ahead."

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5 WEIRDEST THINGS AUTOMAKERS MAKE

Concept cars aren't the weirdest things automakers create. Considering how much goes into designing, a vehicle, it's no surprise automakers dabble in other markets. But sometimes automakers put their name on lifestyle products that seem a bit out there. Here are the five weirdest things automakers make that aren't cars. **JASON SIU/AUTOGUIDE.COM**



1 Lexus Hoverboard

It's the weirdest thing an automaker makes that isn't a car and also the most awesome thing an automaker makes that isn't a car. Lexus created a hoverboard called "Slide" and it actually works like how you would imagine a hoverboard should. Its design features the iconic Lexus spindle grille signature shape and uses materials found in various Lexus vehicles, including natural bamboo. Now if only Lexus could get this into the hands of consumers at a reasonable price; it might actually become more popular than its cars.



2 Aston Martin Condo Tower

Now there's a condo fit for James Bond. The British automaker best known for supplying 007's supercars is branching out and developing a 66-story tower called the Aston Martin Residences in downtown Miami, Fla. Aston Martin is partnering with wealthy Argentine developers on the project and it marks the first time the company has been involved with real estate. A team from Aston Martin will actually design the building's common areas and amenities, including lobbies, fitness centers and a spa. The project was announced in October 2016 and has a current completion date of 2021.



3 Lexus Sport Yacht Concept

Lexus isn't the only automaker that has collaborated on a yacht, but the Japanese automaker isn't as prestigious of a brand as say, Mercedes-AMG or Bugatti. What makes the Lexus Sport Yacht Concept so weird is that it actually employs a pair of Lexus V8 engines and styling was done by the Lexus Design Center in Toyota City, Japan. The idea actually came to life after Toyota president Akio Toyoda visited the Toyota Marine Department to spend several days on the water driving their new Ponam range of premium yachts. The company has no plans of producing the yacht for general consumers, but a bespoke one-off was done with help from the Marquis-Carver Yacht Group of Pulaski, Wisconsin.



5 BMW Bobsled

Not only did BMW craft a bobsled, it made one that carried Team USA to a Winter Olympics victory at Sochi. It was the first time Team USA took home a medal in two-man bobsledding since 1952, finishing third for the bronze medal. BMW subsidiary Designworks helped with the project, and the result was a bobsled made out of carbon fiber and taking on the sleek shape you'd find on a Formula 1 car. Now, the weight of an Olympic bobsled is fixed at 374 pounds, but engineers were able to distribute the weight cleverly, shifting the center of gravity for better steering. Sound familiar? It's not too far from how BMW approaches its cars. The German automaker reportedly spent \$24-million on the project, but that's a small price to pay for an Olympic medal.



"The Giants will always be my family": Barry Bonds is back with San Francisco as a special adviser



Caps' money guys finally get to Elliott

NHL

Flames goalie has win streak halted at 11-straight

T.J. Oshie is leading the Washington Capitals in goals, but Alex Ovechkin is again leading them into the playoffs.

Ovechkin had a goal and two assists as the NHL-leading Capitals beat the surging Calgary Flames 4-2 Tuesday night and snapped goaltender Brian Elliott's franchise-record winning streak at 11 games.

While Oshie reached 30 goals in a season for the first time in a contract year led Ovechkin to proclaim, "Ka-ching," the Russian superstar was the best player on the ice with 11 shots in one of his most dominant performances in recent months.

"If he's got 11 shots every game, at least one is going to go in," said linemate Nicklas Backstrom, whose three assists tied him with Connor McDavid for the league lead with 57. "When he's forechecking like he is right now and he's hitting guys, it makes a big difference for the whole team."

In addition to a season-high 11 shots and a perfect setup on Oshie's goal, Ovechkin drew a tripping penalty and was feeling the puck all night. It took the top



Alex Ovechkin's third-period power-play goal rises over Flames goalie Brian Elliott's shoulder on Tuesday night in Washington. MOLLY RILEY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TUESDAY IN D.C.

4	2
CAPITALS	FLAMES

line skating circles around the Flames and generating quality scoring chances to beat Elliott, who kept his team in the game by stopping 36 shots.

Playing his 300th career game, counterpart Braden Holt-

by celebrated his bobblehead night by making 29 saves for Washington.

Sean Monahan and Troy Brouwer — whom the Capitals traded to the Blues for Oshie two summers ago — scored for the Flames in just their fifth loss in 22 games. The defeat certainly doesn't hang on Elliott, who tied Mike Vernon for the longest winning streak in franchise history before Washington was too much to handle.

"Moose kept us in and we

had a chance right at the end to get points out of that game," Calgary captain Mark Giordano said. "That's what's most disappointing, I think."

While the Flames continue their three-game road trip trying to move into one of the top three spots in the Pacific Division at Nashville on Thursday, the Capitals are trying to fend off the Penguins and Columbus Blue Jackets for home-ice advantage and first place in the Metropolitan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Kershaw, Nishikawa tops at Ski Nationals

Emily Nishikawa and Devon Kershaw battled through difficult conditions to climb onto the top of the women's and men's podiums in the cross-country classic-ski interval start races on Tuesday at the 2017 Ski Nationals.

Fresh off competing in front of more than 50,000 strong at the World Cup Finals in Quebec City, two of the veterans of the National Ski Team handily won their first national titles of 2017.

"It was so hard, hot and the conditions were vicious," said Kershaw. "I cramped up with five kilometres to go. It was a really hard day. But this is my home. I love Canmore and I think it is important for the

**This is my home.
I love Canmore.**

Devon Kershaw

kids to see that even after a hard World Cup season you should come and support the national championships."

The 34-year-old Kershaw, from Sudbury, Ont., won the men's 15-kilometre race with a time of 45 minutes 5.3 seconds.

Nishikawa, from Whitehorse, won the women's 10-kilometre classic-ski race in 29:07.6.

"It was great to be back racing today in Canmore and see so many friendly faces out there," said the 2014 Olympian.

"It was tough racing today, having raced three races last weekend in Quebec and then travel, but I was so happy to be able to race." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Homan's Team Canada curlers zero in on playoffs

Canada is on the verge of clinching a playoff spot at the world women's curling championship after a pair of wins on Tuesday in Beijing.

Ottawa's Rachel Homan defeated South Korea's EunJung Kim 9-8 and dumped Scotland's Eve Muirhead 8-2 in evening play. The Canadian team of Homan, third Emma Miskew, second Joanne Courtney and lead Lisa Weagle improved to 7-0 in round-robin play.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Decorated Canadian swimmer Cochrane retires

Two-time Olympic medallist Ryan Cochrane announced his retirement from swimming on Tuesday.

Cochrane won Olympic silver in the 1,500 metres in 2012 in London and bronze in 2008 in Beijing. He finished sixth in the distance in Rio.

The 28-year-old from Victoria also collected a total of eight world championship medals, the most by a Canadian.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Daniels motivated by Grey Cup letdown

CFL

Stampeders receiver was league's top rookie in 2016

The bitterness of defeat remains within DaVaris Daniels.

The 2016 season was a solid one for the Calgary Stampeders receiver, who was the league's top rookie. But what drove the former Notre Dame star this off-season was working to avenge the club's heart-breaking 39-33 overtime Grey Cup loss to the Ottawa Redblacks last November in Toronto.

Daniels, in Regina for CFL Week festivities, said he hasn't completely got over the Grey Cup disappointment.

"The crazy part about it is I don't think any of us have really," Daniels said. "It's definitely going to stay there until we kick off this season."

"That's what will drive us and I don't think that's a bad thing."

Calgary posted a CFL-best 15-2-1 record last year and dominated the league awards as Daniels was one of five Stampeders to receive individual honours. But the club



DaVaris Daniels

THE CANADIAN PRESS

couldn't finish the deal as Ottawa claimed the Grey Cup after finishing atop the East with a 8-9-1 record.

It was the first time in

CFL history a franchise with a losing mark had finished first in its conference. The loss tarnished a solid rookie season for the speedy six-foot-two, 205-pound Daniels, who

I've got a whole year under my belt now ... I think I'm light years ahead of where I was. DaVaris Daniels

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had 51 catches for 885 yards and nine TDs in 11 games.

Not bad, considering Daniels figured he was finished with football in 2015. After being bypassed in the NFL draft, Daniels signed as a free agent with both the Minnesota Vikings and New England Patriots, only to be released each time.

"I think I can be a lot better this year," Daniels said. "Last off-season, I wasn't training the way I should've been because I didn't think I'd play football again."

"This year, I came into the off-season knowing my responsibility to the Calgary Stampeders. I don't want to let those guys down at all so I put a lot of work in." THE CANADIAN PRESS



Stampeders receiver DaVaris Daniels watches the Redblacks celebrate winning the Grey Cup on Nov. 27, 2016 in Toronto.

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CRIME

Suspected jersey thief bragged about swag

The Mexican media executive suspected of stealing Tom Brady's jersey went to the Super Bowl as a working journalist but spent the week collecting selfies and autographs from football greats and boasting to colleagues that he was there as a fan.

Mexican journalists who were in Houston for the game and interacted with Martin Mauricio Ortega, former director of the tabloid La Prensa, told The Associated Press that he brought multiple NFL mem-

He didn't tell me exactly what he had, he just said that back home he had a lot of stuff.

Journalist Arturo Palafox

orabilia items, including a Kurt Warner jersey he hoped to sell to the former quarterback for thousands of dollars.

Working with U.S. investigators, Mexican authorities obtained a search warrant and recovered the jersey March 12, along with another Brady jersey that disappeared after

the 2015 Super Bowl. A helmet belonging to a Denver Broncos player was also discovered, according to NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Newton will have surgery on throwing shoulder

Panthers quarterback Cam Newton will undergo surgery on March 30 to repair a partially torn rotator cuff in his right throwing shoulder.

Panthers team spokesman Steve Drummond said Tuesday that Newton will miss minicamp and OTAs, but is expected to be ready for the start of training camp in late July.

The 27-year-old Newton injured his shoulder in Week 14 last season against the San Diego Chargers. He finished the game — and the season — for Carolina without missing a snap. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Te'o joining Saints: Source

A person familiar with the situation says NFL veteran linebacker Manti Te'o has

agreed sign a two-year contract with the New Orleans Saints.

Te'o, a former Notre Dame star, has played 38 games during four NFL seasons, all with San Diego, where he's made 221 solo or assisted tackles, including 1-1/2 sacks. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Schweinsteiger bailing on Man United for MLS' Fire

World Cup winner Bastian Schweinsteiger is leaving Manchester United to join the Chicago Fire.

The 32-year-old German midfielder struggled to replicate the highs of his Bayern Munich career in England because of injuries and lack of playing opportunities. His move to Chicago is dependent on passing a medical examination and obtaining a visa. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAKE IT TONIGHT

Refreshing Green Goddess Salad

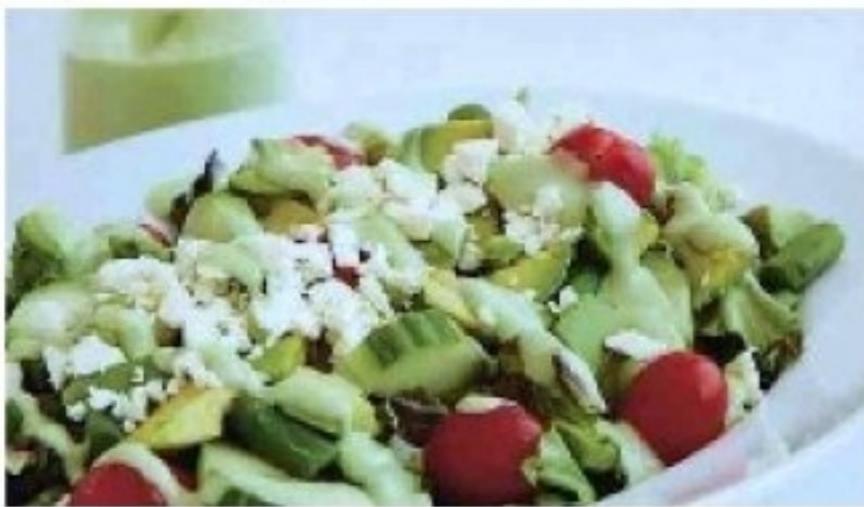


PHOTO: MAYA VISNEY

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

The play of creamy and crunchy in this salad makes it irresistible. And its green freshness is almost enough to remind us that spring is coming.

Ready in 15 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients

- 1/2 English cucumber, sliced
- 1 handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/2 avocado
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 2 Tbsp chives, basil (you could use tarragon, dill, parsley, etc)
- 3 tsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp anchovy paste
- 1 cup scallions
- 6 or 7 stalks of asparagus, trimmed
- 2 or 3 handfuls of Boston or Bibb lettuce
- 1/2 avocado, cubed

- 1/2 English cucumber, sliced
- 1 handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled

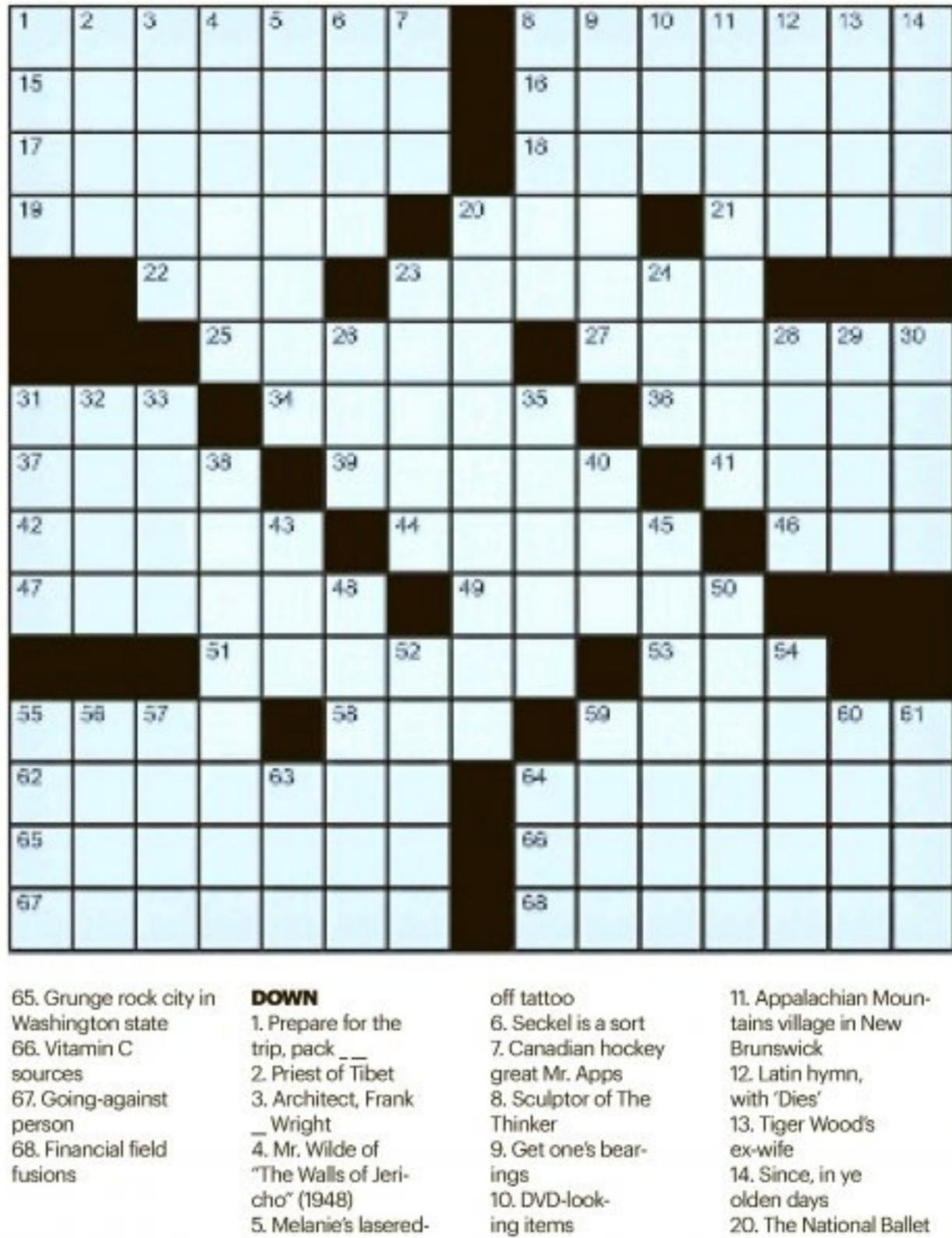
Directions

1. Place the first six ingredients in a blender and whiz away. Have a taste and see if it needs a bit more buttermilk to thin it out or a splash more vinegar to brighten it up.
2. Cook the asparagus in simmering water for 3 to 5 minutes until just tender. Plunge them into ice water to stop them from over cooking. Then drain and chop into bite-sized pieces.
3. Wash and dry all of your other veggies. Tear and arrange your lettuce on a large platter or on each plate.
4. Top with avocado, asparagus, cucumber, tomato.
5. Dress your salad and then top with feta.

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BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



65. Grunge rock city in Washington state
53. ___ in Halifax
55. Competent
58. "The Man ___ Fell to Earth" (1976)
59. The ___ Union
62. It flows in the direction the wind is blowing: 2 wds.
64. Alleviate

1. Prepare for the trip, pack ___
66. Vitamin C sources
67. Going-against person
68. Financial field fusions
5. Melanie's lasererd-

off tattoo
6. Seckel is a sort
7. Canadian hockey great Mr. Apps
3. Architect, Frank ___ Wright
4. Mr. Wilde of "The Walls of Jericho" (1948)
11. Appalachian Mountains village in New Brunswick
12. Latin hymn, with 'Dies'
13. Tiger Woods' ex-wife
14. Since, in ye olden days
20. The National Ballet

of Canada's current production about a famous marionette ...more at #38-Down!
23. Skirmish
24. Alternatives
26. Singer's clip on MuchMusic, for short
28. ___ and carrots
29. Do ___ others...
30. Apple part
31. Proofer's term
32. Therefore
33. Victoria-born painter Emily
35. U.S.-Canadian airspace protection org.
38. Lumberjack in the show at #20-Down which offers a Canuck spin on the classic tale
40. Groove
43. Pop group, '___ Tuesday
45. Rhodes student at Oxford
48. Dilly-dally
50. 1974: "(You're) ___ My Baby" by Paul Anka
52. Jolliness
54. Warfare takeover
55. In addition
56. Horn's honk!
57. Spring
59. Bone-dry
60. Of all time
61. "Guarding ___" (1994)
63. The current US President's oldest daughter ...her initials-shares
64. Movie genre, ___-com

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

8		7		9	
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*IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
During conversations with bosses and VIPs today, don't volunteer for anything. Also, don't agree to anything important. (This is for your own protection.)

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Although you are interested in travel plans right now, do not make those plans today. Whatever you start today probably will have to be changed later.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is a good day for important discussions, especially about shared property, inheritances or decisions about how to divide something. Postpone these discussions until Friday. (You will be glad you did.)

Cancer June 22 - July 23
When talking to close friends and partners today, keep things light. This is not a good day to make agreements. Things are just too fuzzy.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Just maintain your usual pace at work today and don't try anything new. Do not volunteer for anything or suggest improvements. Wait until Friday to do this.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
This is a wonderfully creative day for your sign, because your imagination is free-floating! If you work in the arts or in the entertainment world, you will have great ideas

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This is the perfect day for hiding at home and relaxing. Do not shop for anything other than food or gas. Just take it easy.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is a great day to schmooze and talk to others, because you feel friendly and lighthearted. Enjoy these discussions, but avoid important decisions.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This is a poor day for any kind of financial negotiation. Don't spend money professionally. And when it comes to personal spending, spend money on food or gas only.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Today the Moon is in your sign, but it's in a hazy placement. In fact, it's a goofy day that is great for creativity and socializing, but not serious business.

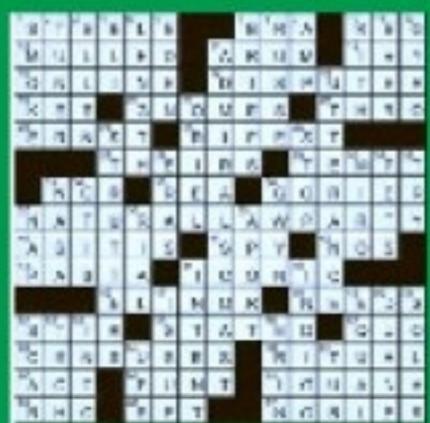
Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You will enjoy being by yourself today, especially if you can find solitude in beautiful surroundings. Basically, it's hard to get really serious about anything.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
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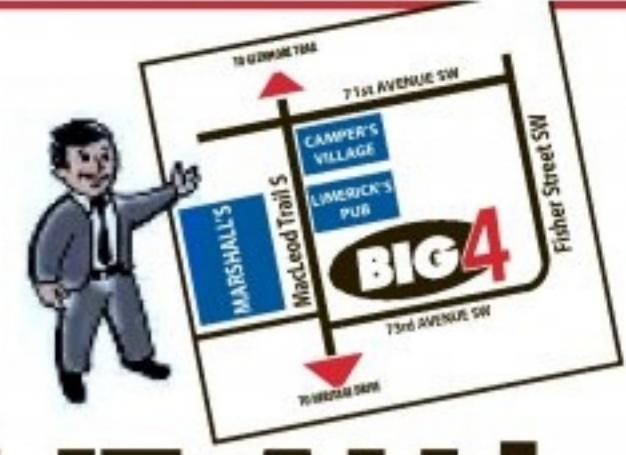
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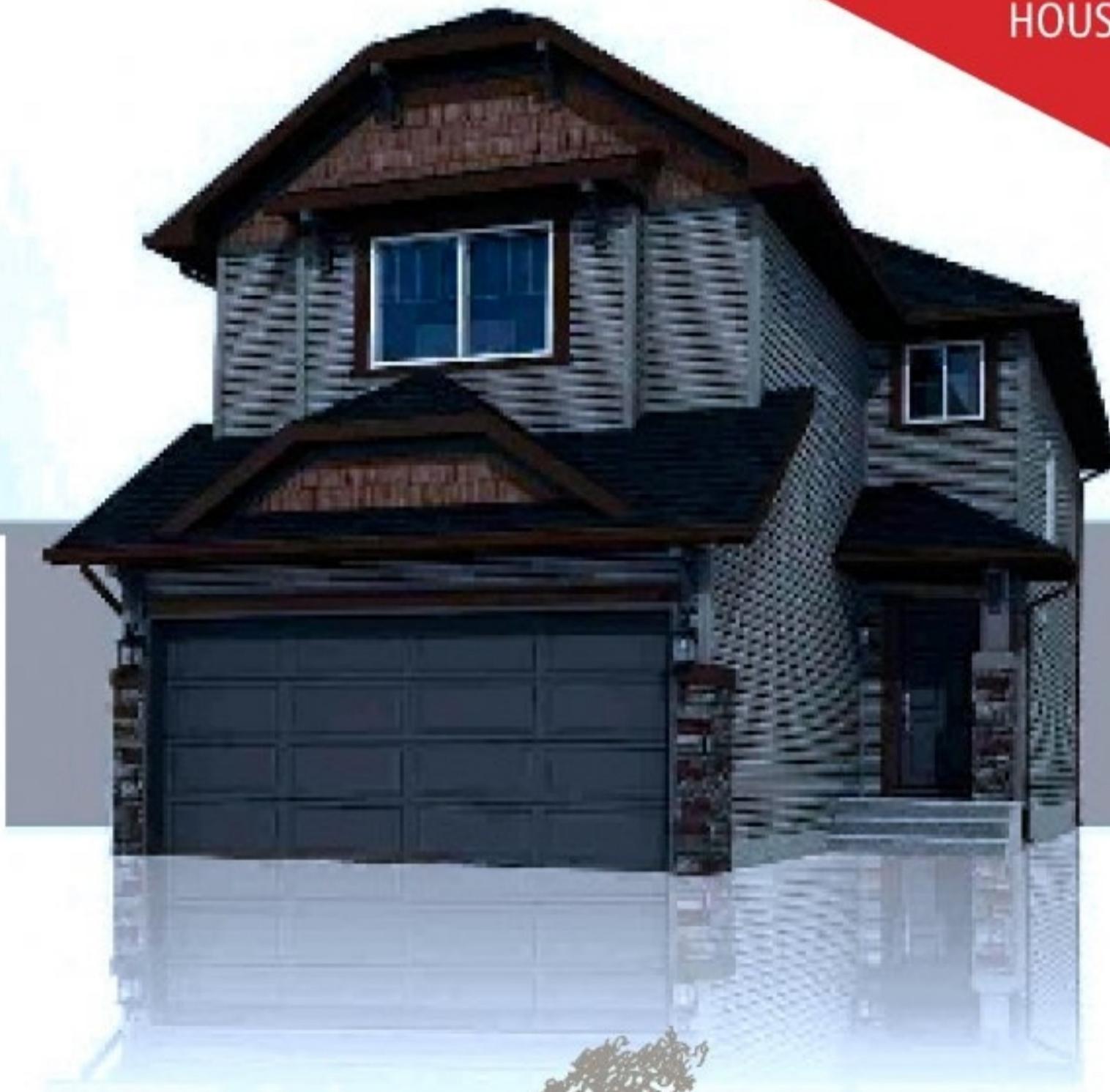


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HEALTH CARE

Coalition to help improve the system in Airdrie

Krista Sylvester

Health care concerns have always been top of mind for Airdrie residents, and a recently formed coalition is working toward identifying and improving the system.

Former dean of the Cumming School of Medicine at

the University of Calgary, Dr. Tom Feasby, was appointed president and CEO of the Airdrie and Area Health Benefits Co-operative (AAHBC) in January 2017.

The AAHBC — formally incorporated as a co-operative in Alberta in December 2016 — will provide primary and proactive healthcare and urgent care to residents of Airdrie and area. Feasby says this is a relatively unique way to offer health services.

While the learning curve has been steep, Feasby says it's been an interesting process so far.

"People have been trying to improve the health care system

for a long time so it's not really a new story. We have been trying to understand what's been done, who the stakeholders are, what the issues are and what the potentials are," he explains.

"I would say that so far there's a lot of interest in what's going on. I think people have various levels of understanding and there's been some concerns as well, which I've been trying to understand what those are and address them."

Feasby's leadership experience and former executive roles in health service prepared him to take on such a dynamic and important role, though he knows it won't be easy.

"This is a complex idea that involves a community getting together in this arena. The idea is to do this as a collective so that all of the members of the community — individuals and organizations — have a role in planning, determining issues and how to meet them."

Currently, one of the biggest issues facing Airdrie is the fact there isn't a hospital; in many cases, patients need to go to Didsbury or Calgary in emergencies. However, the Airdrie Community Health Centre is an urgent care centre and beginning in April will operate 24-hours a day, which is a step in the right direction, says Feasby.

"It will help but nonetheless it's just one piece of a complex puzzle."

The AAHBC plans to build a health park where residents can access healthcare in a one-stop shop. The co-op format is designed to reduce pressure on government healthcare budgets. Senior health care, mental health and addiction services, secondary health such as physiotherapy and acupuncture, as well as dentistry and eye care will all be offered through the health co-op and membership is free.

However, there is no timeline for the project.

"It will be available and active as soon as possible, but I don't really know exactly when. This kind of work takes more time than you might think. I wish it were quick but we can't just lay it out and say here it is. People won't buy that so we have to work with them and make sure that their needs are being heard," Feasby adds.



Dr. Tom Feasby, inset, was appointed president and CEO of the Airdrie and Area Health Benefits Co-operative (AAHBC) in January 2017. JULIE C VINCENT PHOTOS, INSET/CONTRIBUTED



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Daily ICE service moving residents

Christy Nich

Perhaps it's a sign that Calgary is a major city when it has commuter buses from the smaller towns to help get those residents to their jobs every morning.

Airdrie Transit's Intercity Express, or ICE, provides service every day of the week from early morning, throughout the day, to as late as 11 o'clock in the evening on some routes. The first of

the Calgary Region's municipal transit service, Airdrie showed its belief in commuter services by launching their South Transit Terminal in December 2015. It services two routes within Airdrie and all three of the routes which take commuters into Calgary.

At an estimated cost of \$3.5 million, the project saw the construction of the Transit Terminal with an off-street bus platform, large heated transit shelter for customers, operator facilities and parking for approximately 150 vehicles, but it also included the extension of Main Street and utilities.

Chris MacIsaac, Transit Coordinator for the City of Airdrie, said at the time it was launched, "The opening of the South Transit Terminal outlines our commitment to improving the customer experience of using



Airdrie showed its belief in commuter services by launching their South Transit Terminal in December 2015. CONTRIBUTED

public transit," and added, "The new terminal will provide more seamless connections between Intercity Express and local services and will provide our customers with a permanent park and ride location."

What it boils down to is a win/

win situation for the citizens of Airdrie. Housing prices are still high in Calgary, so many people choose to live outside of the city. Airdrie enjoys lower housing costs, but does not provide the employment opportunities that Cal-

gary has, nor does it have the post-secondary education options of its neighbour to the south. The solution is to buy or rent in Airdrie, then commute to Calgary. Not only do you pay less for shelter, but you get to enjoy a quieter lifestyle as well.

Your trip on a commuter bus provides you 45 minutes of time where you can read, listen to your headphones or do whatever distracted driving laws prohibit, "You can focus on you and not the road," says MacIsaac. And you don't have to pay for parking, either. He says "There's always been demand for this and our commuter services have grown tremendously over the last six years". He says it's especially attractive for the post-secondary student demographic who don't have the disposable income to afford a car,

insurance and parking fees.

Your fare depends on which route you choose and your method of payment. For example, a single ticket for either of the Airdrie to downtown routes is \$9, so a round trip would cost you \$18 per day. To take route 900 into Cross Iron Mills or McKnight-Westwinds LRT station in northeast Calgary is \$5 each way and then you pay more to transfer to wherever you want on Calgary Transit. A monthly transit pass in Airdrie, good for use in town AND the ICE system, is \$950 or only \$200 per month for students or seniors.

Southland Transportation have commuter buses in Okotoks and Cochrane and On-It have successfully launched their Calgary services from Okotoks, Black Diamond, High River and Turner Valley.

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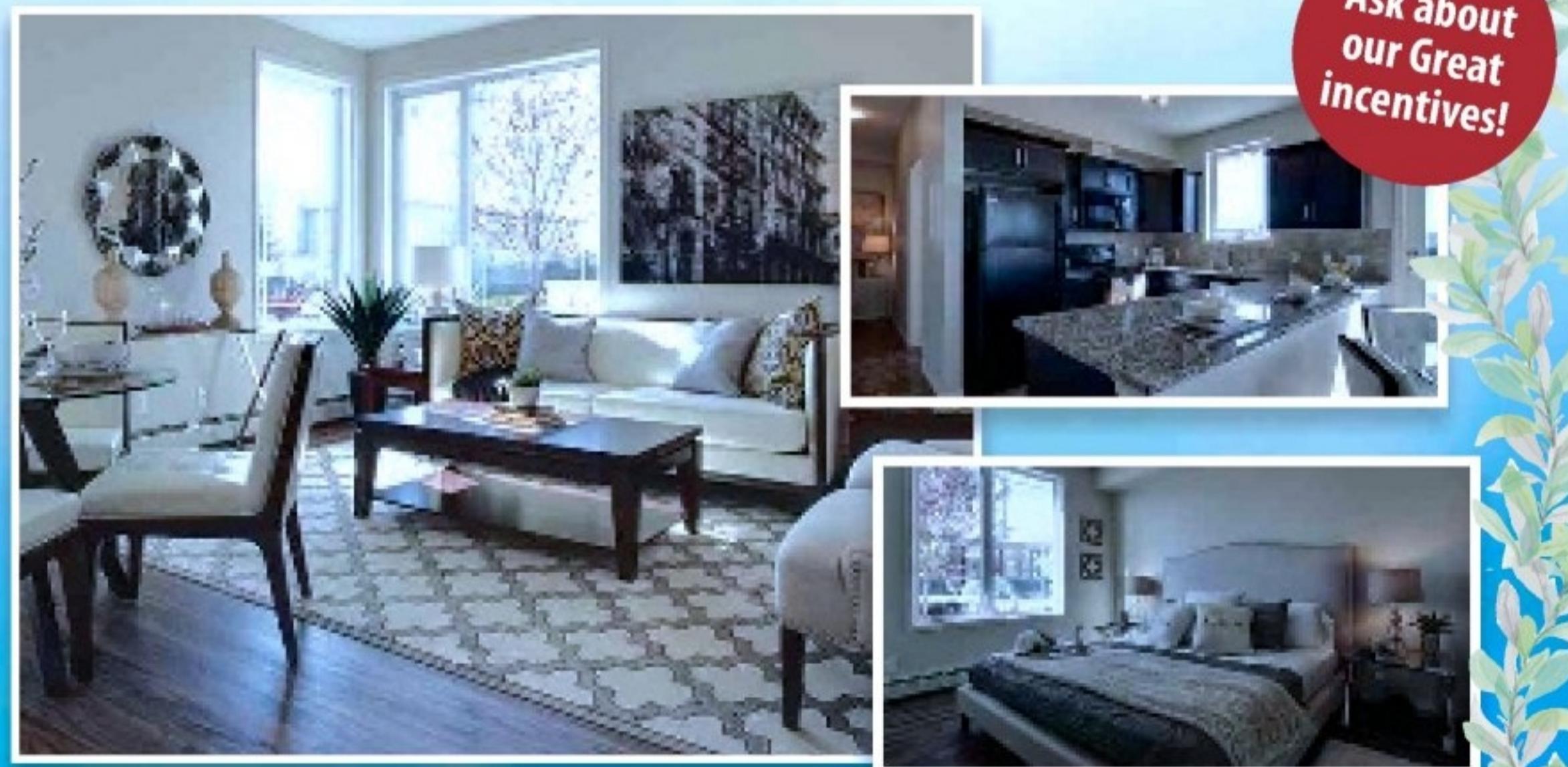
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AIRDRIE LIFE

Survey shows satisfaction is high among residents

Krista Sylvester

Airdrie's latest annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey was released this month and the numbers are good; in fact, overall satisfaction with quality of life remains high at 91 per cent, according to City of Airdrie manager of strategic business services Dorian Kachur. While those numbers are strong, Kachur admits they are a bit lower than 2016's 96 per cent.

"There is some general downward pressure among the high-level indicators, which is also being observed in the other 40-plus municipalities that our consultant surveys. In the detailed responses, however, resident satisfaction with individual services remained very consistent with previous years," she says.

"In a challenging economic time, these results are viewed as very positive."

The telephone survey was conducted from Jan. 11 through 26 by Bannister Research and Consulting from Edmonton at the cost of \$18,000 and acts as a report card for the city.

By the numbers, residents feel very safe in Airdrie, with 94 per cent agreeing it's a safe place to live, two per cent higher than last year. Out of all of the provincial municipalities surveyed, Airdrie residents feel the safest.



Residents say they feel very safe in Airdrie, with 94 per cent agreeing it's a safe place to live, two per cent higher than last year. JULIE C VINCENT PHOTOS

"We often hear a lot about a city with a small town feel so, perhaps feeling a sense of a connected community, and a strong protective services presence also make people feel safe," Kachur adds.

Airdrie residents are also very satisfied with their recreational, community and fire services. Kachur credits these high satisfaction levels to the fact Airdrie is a young, active city with wonderful recreation facilities including Genesis Place, which boasts pools, arenas, a running track, field house and fitness areas.

"Genesis Place is a centerpiece for the community and brings people of all ages together. Our skate park, sports fields, arenas, and parks are well used and valued amenities as well, with year round pathway connectivity throughout the city. Airdrie Fire is often visible in the community promoting fire safety and assisting with community events."

However, despite the high satisfaction levels, Airdrie residents continue to be concerned with infrastructure, traffic and transportation challenges. Many of these issues are related

to growth challenges.

"In our rapidly growing community, pinch points have arisen with transportation. Particular challenges are highway access and egress, and delays from the well-used rail line that runs through the city."

Since the beginning of the year, functional planning and community engagement has started for a grade separation solution at the train tracks, an open house regarding a 40 Avenue interchange, and the city is working with Alberta transportation to plan future highway access.

YOUTH FEEDBACK

Growing up in Airdrie FTW

If you're a teenager or young adult, it turns out that Airdrie is the place to be.

Airdrie's Community Development and Social Planning Department put the call out on Jan. 19 for local youth, ages 12 to 24, to provide feedback on where they would like to see improvements, new developments, and what they think is hitting the mark.

During this time — adolescence and the time surrounding it — there can be difficulty or confusion, knowing which direction you want to pursue. You may feel like your opinion doesn't matter or wonder if your contributions make a difference, and it can be easy for adults to just assume they know what you want in your community.

"It only made sense, based on the research that we've done, that this has to be a strategy that's driven by youth for youth," Clay Aragon, team leader of Development and Social Planning, said at the launch of this initiative.

"What we're wanting to do is get a better understanding from youth of how they want to be engaged with the city and in the community. I think there's a lot of assumptions out there about what the youth want. How do they want to be engaged

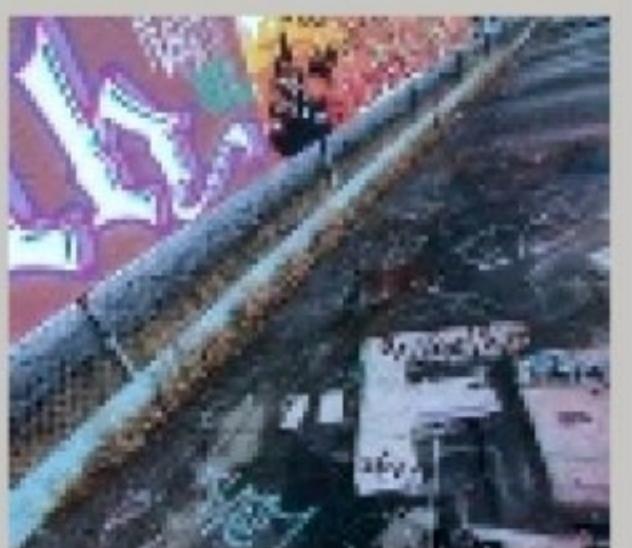
in that process is what we're really trying to understand."

The City of Airdrie Youth Strategy was introduced in 2009 as a way in which the city can collaborate or engage with youth. They've gone through the process three times already and this feedback will help form the current, fourth plan.

"One of the reasons we decided to actually do a 'needs assessment' is to really ground the work on a Youth Strategy in terms of getting feedback from the youth themselves," said Aragon.

The Airdrie Board of Youth Affairs (ABYA) is an integral part of the city's engagement with youth, according to Aragon. The group, which formed in 2005, advises city council and staff on youth issues and is heavily involved in developing the newest Youth Strategy. "They've been engaged as a focus group to provide some feedback," Aragon said, providing guidance on the survey — how it was formed and the questions which would be asked. "They are also providing their feedback as a leadership group. How do they see, from the perspective of their peers, youth being engaged."

CHRISTY NICH



Engaging with youth is a high priority for Airdrie. JULIE C VINCENT PHOTOS



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Local tech business earns accolade

THE I.T. COMPANY

I.T Company makes Alberta Venture's Fast Growth 50 list

Krista Sylvester

You can't succeed without making mistakes because you can't flourish until you have failed and properly moved on.

At least that's what Airdrie-based business The I.T. Company credits their success to: recovering from mistakes. And The I.T. Company is making headlines this year after landing on the

prestigious Alberta Venture's Fast Growth 50 list for 2017, so their recipe for success is working.

The nod comes at the perfect time as the company restructured last year in anticipation of the economy taking a downturn — and the move paid off, according to The I.T. Company CEO Kelly Paisley.

Paisley and his business partner Andrew Bennett started their tech business together in 2008 and haven't stopped growing since with a vision of



providing technical support for companies with up to 300 computers.

"It's nice to receive some validation from an outside source to know that we're doing a good job and that our efforts are being recognized in some manner," Paisley says. "We are excited and surprised to get the award. It's definitely given us a new burst of energy around the office."

Paisley credits a lot of the company's success with doing great work and learning from mistakes.

"You just have to keep at it with a lot of hard work and roll with the

punches when bad things happen, just bounce back and figure out the next step. I think learning how to deal with those challenges is what helped us grow."

And it doesn't hurt to work with great clients, he adds.

"We have excellent clients. Our clients are so good, we love them all to death and the city of Airdrie has been 100 per cent supportive."

Paisley says the city's economic development team has also been very involved with helping businesses succeed and he believes they are a big part of the growth of The I.T. Company. Another big factor? The city of Airdrie itself.

"Airdrie is unique with a small town feeling but it also has a lot

of the amenities of a large city and its proximity to Calgary adds to that. We like that it's such a tightknit community and we know a lot of the other business here; everyone is so supportive of keeping things local and helping each other out and extending a helping hand."

Airdrie is known for being a community that cares and Paisley wholeheartedly agrees.

"I think Airdrie residents are very involved in the community and when new businesses come in, we all make an effort to reach out to them and I think that helps breed this amazing culture and that's why we love it here," Paisley adds.

For more information about The I.T. Company, visit theitco.ca.

HISTORY

Digging into The I.T. Company's past

"How did it all start? In 2004, we launched an internet café in Airdrie but it wasn't long before local businesses began reaching out to us to assist them with their IT infrastructure. Our team has been performing IT services since the home computer was first born, which makes our team able to identify the possibility of an issue before it puts you or your business at risk."

— The I.T. Company

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Airdrie-based artist has eye for rural beauty

Brad Holt has always had a love for Alberta's beautiful landscape. Born and raised on a rural farm near Strathmore, the mixed media artist bases much of his art on the province's rich history. With his roots in the farming and 4H community, Holt has always focused his art on the beauty Alberta has to offer.

Having lived in Airdrie for the past seven years, he feels right at home now more than ever.

"We moved to Airdrie because we wanted to have a family and the amenities for children are just amazing out here and there is a thriving art community too," Holt says. "I like that it's close to Calgary but it is also feels like a small town. People start making friends and everyone knows each other."

Holt's artwork has a Western

feel to it, so living in Airdrie has its perks, not only location wise — most of his subject matter is west of Airdrie — but also because he works with farmers in the area who helps him find old trucks and barn doors that he can transform into art.

"Airdrie's surroundings are influential. Most of my art is rural Alberta and small-town Alberta and Airdrie has a small-town Alberta feel to it. I enjoy working with some of the farmers and incorporating it into my art," Holt adds.

Working from his home studio in Airdrie is perfect for Holt and he often has visitors stopping in to see what he is working on.

Currently, Holt is working on a couple of projects including a commission piece for a



Brad Holt. JULIE C VINCENT PHOTOS

client that features a John Deere tractor. Most of his frames are made from Alberta materials and mixed with acrylic paint and reclaimed wood. Holt and his carpenter brother hand-

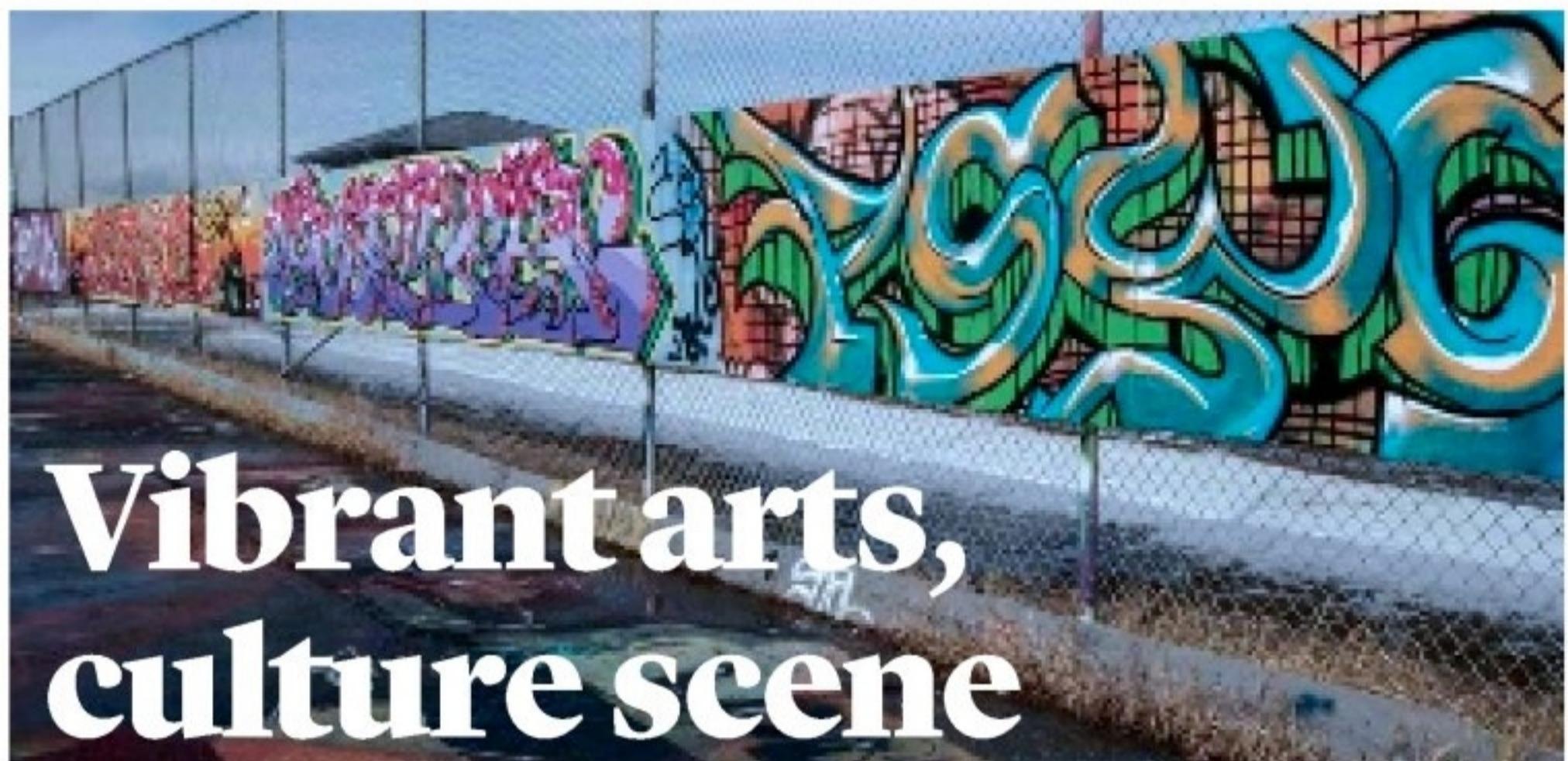
craft each frame.

As much as Holt relishes working on his art, he also likes to spend a lot of time with his family enjoying the amenities Airdrie has to offer.

"Airdrie has lots of programs and they're always trying to connect with people. For families, it is amazing because they have all types of programs for kids and they have an amazing recreation centre where they always hold soccer, hockey and gymnastics. That's part of the reason we like it the most, is because it's nice for families. We like it here."

Holt is available for commissions and is always up for visitors at his studio. He can be reached through his website at holtfineart.com or on Instagram by following Holtfineart.

KRISTA SYLVESTER



Vibrant arts, culture scene

Paint Park was built to encourage graffiti artists to hone their skills in a safe place.

JULIE C VINCENT PHOTOS

CREATIVE AIRDRIE SOCIETY

Program aims to engage and educate community

Krista Sylvester

In a city full of artistic hidden gems, Airdrie is quickly becoming known for its vibrant arts and culture scene.

It helps that non-profit Creative Airdrie Society (CAS) is excelling as a hub for investment, promotion, engagement, development and education of the arts community. Founded in 2010, the group's board is made up of volunteers passionate about engaging Airdrie citizens in a thriving arts community, according to CAS board vice-chair Jennifer Benner.

"Our volunteer board is made up of a fantastic mix of creative champions and savvy business leaders whose diverse backgrounds and expertise are instrumental in navigating the murky waters of economic un-

certainty," Benner says.

"We love our city and we are dedicated to nurturing the things that enrich our lives here."

When it comes to arts and culture, CAS believes Airdrie is one of the "hippest" due to the fact that many of the programs have been built from the ground up. One example is Paint Park, which was built to encourage graffiti artists to hone their skills in a productive environment.

Another example is the beautification of the city using various art wraps and murals on objects that were otherwise considered unsightly. Now they are transformed into beautiful artwork representative of community pride, Benner adds.

"Airdrie's diversity and willingness to look outside the box, makes our arts and culture scene wonderfully textured and offers something for everyone."

While Airdrie's arts and culture scene is growing more vibrant by the day, Benner says it's still astonishing to see the world class, award winning talent that the city offers, while the city in turn provides incentives to local groups.

"This past year, despite the

economic downturn, we managed to raise enough funds to pay out around \$17,000 in honorariums to various artists, performers, service providers and arts volunteers; injecting that money directly back into our local economy," she says. "There are so many hidden gems in Airdrie. We are talking internationally acclaimed designers, Juno Award winners, music icons, published authors and prolific artists."

Airdrie also boasts excellent programs such as the Airdrie Public Library, PACK and Bert Church Live Theatre, to name a few. "We may not be able to offer the quantity but we are certainly not shy on the quality," Benner says.

Every year, the CAS heads up several arts and culture projects, including an annual ARTember festival, the AIRdirondack Chair Project, the Airdrie Mayor's Night of the Arts Awards, and the Karin Simpson Memorial Scholarship for Creativity. This year, in honour of Canada's 150th birthday, the society is pleased to be partnered with the Sharing Dance program and the Canada 150 Mosaic Mural project.

Connecting the community

As one of the fastest growing communities in Alberta, it's no wonder Airdrie puts a lot of stock in its annual Home and Lifestyle Show. It's a place where people work hard to support local business, using this once-a-year weekend to celebrate those successes and connections.

Marking its 40th anniversary, the Airdrie Home and Lifestyle Show runs April 29 and 30 at Genesis Place recreation centre, offering entertainment, food, shopping, swag bags (for the first 250 guests each day) and even a kids gym play area — something for every member of the family.

More than 200 exhibitors

are on hand for the ever-growing event, from home renovation supply retailers — think paint and lumber — to landscapers, financial institutions and non-profit groups. And with plenty of free parking and transit to the site, the show is ready to welcome some 3,000 visitors from all around the region.

Ashley Frame, events manager for the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce, says the Home and Lifestyle show is the biggest yearly fundraiser for the host organization.

"It's an affordable showcase for our member businesses, and a great opportunity for exhibitors to expand their reach, grow their brand and

interact with the public," says Frame. "Some people don't even know we're here, so it's an important way to welcome visitors who come from all around — Calgary, Camrose, Didsbury; even Okotoks and Cochrane."

This bustling city of almost 62,000 sits in a sweet spot in southern Alberta — near Calgary and all its big city amenities, but far enough away to maintain a small town feel.

"It's that friendly vibe that is easy to sense at this show," says Frame.

Visit airdriehomeshow.ca for show hours, exhibitor details and entertainment schedule.

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